



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

ODIHR – Enhancing co-operation with the OSCE’s Mediterranean Partners in the Human Dimension

Framework for co-operation

At the 2011 Ministerial Council meeting in Vilnius, the OSCE participating States decided to further enhance the OSCE’s co-operation with its Mediterranean Partners – Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia – through broadening dialogue, intensifying political consultations, strengthening practical co-operation and further sharing good practices and experience.

Since then, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) has increased its engagement with the OSCE Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation, in accordance with its mandate.

As the OSCE’s main institution for the human dimension, ODIHR aims to assist the OSCE Mediterranean Partners by sharing its own experience and that of OSCE participating States with relevant partners in those countries, including governmental structures and civil society.

ODIHR supports the efforts of participating States to further enhance co-operation with Mediterranean Partners by engaging in action-oriented co-operation with the Partner countries in the human dimension.

How is ODIHR involved?

Upon request, ODIHR supports OSCE Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation as part of the extra-budgetary “Programme on Increasing Understanding of the OSCE Human Dimension”, through the implementation of projects tailored specifically to the needs and context of the requesting state, focusing on different aspects of the human dimension.

The programme includes projects and activities designed to facilitate the transfer of ODIHR expertise in the fields of elections, democratization, human rights and tolerance and non-discrimination, as well as to support dialogue, the exchange of good practice and knowledge transfer between OSCE participating States and the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation.



Election observation

Election observation can assist states to conform to international electoral standards and promote confidence in the honesty and integrity of the electoral process. ODIHR has a wealth of experience in training election observers.

Drawing on its experience of similar democratic transitions within the OSCE region, ODIHR's observation methodology can be readily adopted by citizen observer groups in OSCE Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation.

In past years, ODIHR has trained key national stakeholders in its election observation methodology, helping Mediterranean Partner countries to create a pool of people who can evaluate the progress of democratic reforms in-country over the longer term. This has included training short-term and long-term observers, expert workshops on observation reporting, the provision of expertise at nationally organized events, and the translation and dissemination of election observation handbooks.

Legislative assistance

ODIHR provides legislative support in the human dimension in the form of comprehensive legislative reviews of individual pieces of legislation. Each review is followed up with consultative meetings with key state authorities, including relevant ministries and parliaments, as well as with representatives of civil society, to discuss the recommendations and practical implications of ODIHR legal reviews.

ODIHR's legislative assistance focuses, in particular, on support in the fields of elections, freedom of peaceful assembly, independence of the judiciary, national human rights institutions, political parties and combating terrorism and domestic violence.

As a result, ODIHR provides legal opinions, including concrete sets of recommendations, to legislators and other relevant stakeholders from OSCE Mediterranean Partner countries. These enable them to develop and implement legislative changes guided by OSCE human dimension commitments and other international human rights standards applicable in their countries.

Since 2012, ODIHR has reviewed numerous pieces of Tunisian legislation, and has held consultative meetings with representatives of the Ministries of Justice, Interior and Human Rights and Transitional Justice, as well as the Election Management Body and the National Constituent Assembly.

Political participation, gender equality and parliamentary strengthening

ODIHR supports the efforts of OSCE participating States to improve democratic governance in Mediterranean Partner countries, including in increasing the level of political participation among women and youth, strengthening parliaments and developing multiparty political landscapes, through policy dialogue and the exchange of good practices and experience.

To this end, ODIHR contributes its expertise to events organized by international organizations, governments and civil society in Mediterranean Partner countries, on issues such as women and youth participation in legislatures and political parties, capacity-building of women candidates and youth leaders, political party regulation and parliamentary ethics.

Since 2012, the Office has contributed to conferences, training activities and expert workshops in Tunisia and other Mediterranean Partner countries organized by national authorities and international and local organizations, including the UNDP, UN Women, the National Democratic Institute (NDI), the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), and the Tunisian School of Politics.

Human rights training

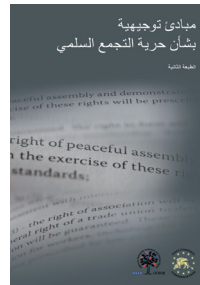
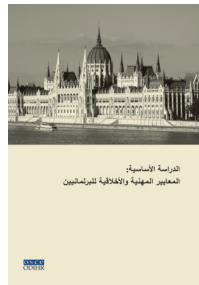
ODIHR has significant experience in providing human rights training and capacity building for state and civil society actors. Participants from Mediterranean Partner countries have already been included in ODIHR's human rights training activities. The freedom of peaceful assembly and human rights in the fight against terrorism have been identified as issues of particular relevance in OSCE Mediterranean Partner countries. Upon request, ODIHR can provide additional training in these areas.

Exchange of experience

ODIHR fosters the exchange of knowledge and experience between civil society and government representatives from the Mediterranean Partner countries and representatives from the OSCE region, through mandated ODIHR activities such as the OSCE/ODIHR annual Human Dimension Implementation Meeting and thematic Supplementary Human Dimension Meetings.

ODIHR tools and publications

In the human dimension, ODIHR works to promote its tools and publications in Arabic and make them accessible to OSCE Mediterranean Partner countries, as a basis for the exchange of good practices and transfer of knowledge from the OSCE region. All publications available in Arabic – 18 in total – are available online: <http://www.osce.org/odihr/97622>



The partnership principle

ODIHR works with a range of partners to support national efforts to strengthen democratic institutions and promote human rights.

Our partners include:

- Partners for Co-operation — specifically national parliaments, relevant Ministries, election management bodies, national human rights institutions and political party regulators;
- International organizations — UN agencies, the Council of Europe’s European Commission for Democracy through Law (the Venice Commission) and the Union for the Mediterranean, as well as political parties and civil society organizations in Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation countries.

Overview of co-operation

Extra-budgetary contributions have enabled ODIHR to follow up on recommendations made by civil society representatives at the 2011 Vilnius Conference, leading to increasing engagement with OSCE Mediterranean Partner governments.

Since 2012, ODIHR has implemented a total of 52 activities in the areas of democratic governance, elections, legislative assistance and women’s political participation. These activities have directly benefited more than 806 civil society and government representatives in Mediterranean Partner countries.

More information

For detailed information about ODIHR’s collaboration with OSCE Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation and to view its full range of resources and publications, please visit www.osce.org/networks/97636

or contact ODIHR at:

OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

Public Affairs
 Ul. Miodowa 10
 00–251 Warsaw, Poland

TEL +48 22 520 06 00
 FAX +48 22 520 06 05
 E-MAIL office@odihr.pl
www.osce.org/odihr

