



Office for Democratic Institutions
and Human Rights

Guidelines on the Protection of Human Rights Defenders

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Human Rights Department, Human Rights Defenders Team - Monitoring Portfolio



Key OSCE commitments on the protection of human rights defenders

OSCE participating States recognize:

- The right of the individual **to know and act** upon rights and duties (Helsinki 1975);
- The right of the individual to seek, receive and impart views and information about human rights, discuss their observance, join human rights NGOs, communicate and co-operate with similar bodies, seek and receive financial contributions, seek and receive assistance from others and assist others in defending human rights (Copenhagen 1990);
- The need for **the protection of human rights defenders** (Budapest 1994).

The ODIHR Guidelines on the Protection of Human Rights Defenders

- ODIHR Guidelines do not set new standards or seek to create 'special' rights
- Based on long-standing engagement with human rights defenders, including reports on the situation of HRDs
- A result of a broad consultation process with various stakeholders
- The Guidelines are the basis of our monitoring and capacity-building work regarding HRDs

Guidelines on the Protection of Human Rights Defenders



The ODIHR Guidelines on the Protection of Human Rights Defenders

- Policy guide document published in 2014;
- Available in 11 languages: English, Russian, Italian, Spanish, French, Hungarian, Serbian, Turkish, Ukrainian, Georgian and Mongolian.

<https://www.osce.org/odihr/guidelines-on-the-protection-of-human-rights-defenders>



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- Explanatory Report
- Physical integrity, liberty and security and dignity of HRDs
- Other aspects of a safe and enabling environment
- Framework for implementation

Physical integrity, liberty and security and dignity of HRDs

- Largely about hard security: protection from targeting such as threats, intimidation, attacks, undue pressure, etc.
- Judicial harassment
- Smear campaigns, stigmatization, marginalization, etc.

Other aspects of a safe and enabling environment

- Enjoyment of various (other) human rights, such as:
 - Freedom of expression
 - Freedom of peaceful assembly
 - Freedom of association
 - The right to participate in public affairs
 - Freedom of movement
 - Right to private life
 - Right to access and communicate with international bodies

Second edition of the Guidelines

- Topics to be covered (in more detail):
 - HRDs in exile
 - Transnational repression
 - SLAPPs
 - New technologies
 - 'Foreign agent' legislation
 - Access to funding

Questions or comments?

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