



## **Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting III (2025)**

Vienna Austria, 2 - 3 June 2025

### **SCHEDULE AND OVERVIEW**

#### **OF SIDE EVENTS**

*as submitted by the organizers*

*The Helsinki Document of 1992 (Chapter IV) called for increasing the openness of OSCE activities and expanding the role of NGOs. In particular, in paragraph (15) of Chapter IV the participating States decided to facilitate during CSCE meetings informal discussion meetings between representatives of participating States and of NGOs, and to provide encouragement to NGOs organizing seminars on CSCE-related issues. In line with this decision, governments, civil society and other participants are encouraged to organize side meetings at the Review Conference on relevant issues of their choice. The side events below have been exclusively organized and scheduled exclusively at the request of participants of the Human Dimension Meetings. The below descriptions have been provided by the organizers. They may have been lightly edited by ODIHR for language but not for content. Responsibility for the content remains with the organizers. Neither the text below nor the events themselves necessarily reflect the views of the OSCE and the organizers of Human Dimension Meetings.*

#### **Tuesday, 3 June**

Time: **09:00-10:00**  
Venue: **Bibliotheksaal**  
Title: **LGBTQ+ Rights in the OSCE Region**  
Convenor: **Human Rights House Foundation**  
Working language: English

##### **Summary:**

States have a legal obligation under international law to protect the human rights of all persons without discrimination. This right exists regardless of States' political, economic, and cultural systems. In the most recent report on hate incidents from 2023, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) reported nearly 10,000 hate incidents, of which more than 1,600 incidents were anti-LGBTQ+. A 2023 report by the Williams Institute indicates a correlation between democratic backsliding and rises in discriminatory policies and rhetoric from state actors targeting LGBTQ+ communities. At the same time, organisations representing LGBTQ+ persons (or other traditionally marginalised groups) face challenges in accessing policy makers or government institutions. Likewise, as the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Special Representative on Gender Issues noted in her 2024 report, anti-NGO legislation across the OSCE region is closing the space available for LGBTQ+ rights

defenders and NGOs working to advance LGBTQ+ rights. This, in turn, can have a devastating effect on traditionally marginalised groups. This side event will bring together key civil society representatives to explore trends related to the promotion and protection of rights for LGBTQ+ persons in the OSCE region. The panel will explore: - What challenges do human rights defenders and organisations face in advancing LGBTQ+ rights? - What legislative or legal hurdles, and discrimination trends, remain to fully protect the rights of LGBTQ+ persons? - What role are enforcement agencies playing in the protection of the rights of LGBTQ+ persons? - What role can OSCE participating States play in supporting efforts to expand protection for LGBTQ+ persons in the OSCE region?

Time: **13:15-14:15**

Venue: **Room 531**

Title: “Roots of Atrocity: Azerbaijan’s State-sponsored Systematic Discrimination and Ethnic Cleansing of Armenians”

Convenor: Union of Informed Citizens

Working language: English

Summary:

The “Roots of Atrocity: Azerbaijan’s State-sponsored Systematic Discrimination and Ethnic Cleansing of Armenians” Side Event focuses on manifestations and consequences of ethnic discrimination and hate targeting Armenians, as documented over the years in various contexts. These patterns of exclusion – historically institutionalized – are still evident today, not only in the treatment of ethnic minorities but also in the marginalization of dissenting voices within Azerbaijan. The Side Event aims to highlight how entrenched discriminatory practices, unless addressed through inclusive policies and democratic governance, continue to pose risks to regional peace and security. Tolerance and non-discrimination are not only moral imperatives but also prerequisites for building resilient and secure societies. Therefore, the discussion will emphasize the broader relevance of inclusive governance, minority rights, and democratic institution-building across the region. The Side Event will be a platform to ensure that the event promotes shared principles rather than targeted criticism.

The Side Event will highlight:

- Arlette Zakarian - Attorney based in Austria and France,
- Arpi Harutyunyan - Human Rights Expert from Democracy Development Foundation (DDF),
- Gayane Abrahamyan - Executive Director “For Equal Rights” (FER) NGO,
- Moderator: Daniel Ioannisyan - Projects Coordinator Union of Informed Citizens (UIC).

Time: **13:15-14:15**

Venue: **Room 533**

Title: The Council of Europe’s Intercultural Inclusion Approach: Unlocking the Diversity Power for Cohesive Societies

Convenor: Council of Europe

Working language: English

Summary:

This session explores the Council of Europe’s pioneering approach to intercultural inclusion, stemming from over two decades of experience within the framework of the Intercultural Cities (ICC) Programme supporting local authorities in managing diversity through intercultural policies that embrace diversity as an advantage, ensure real equality for every resident, and create the conditions for meaningful intercultural interaction, as well as for active citizenship and participation for all. At the heart of this

model lies the idea of inclusion as a two-way process that involves and benefits the entire society. The experience of many intercultural cities and regions shows that that such approach builds trust and shared values; it fosters a sense of belonging within a pluralistic and cohesive society and ultimately enhances the security, wellbeing and prosperity for all. The session will highlight how this approach can effectively promote tolerance and non-discrimination, not only through local-level action, but also through coordinated horizontal and multilevel governance by different levels of government. Based on best practices from cities across Europe and beyond, the workshop will offer participants a chance to reflect on how to implement intercultural inclusion in national and international policy frameworks, bridging institutional divides and unlocking the diversity advantage.

Time: **13:15-14:15**  
Venue: **Bibliotheksaal**  
Title: Faith and the Future  
Convenor: KAICIID International Dialogue Centre  
Working language: English

**Summary:**

In a time of growing societal fragmentation, geopolitical uncertainty, and declining trust in multilateral institutions, the intersection of religion, diplomacy, and peacebuilding offers a vital—yet often underexplored—pathway to reconciliation grounded on shared values. Religious leaders and faith actors play a unique role in fostering social cohesion, addressing exclusion, and healing divisions—contributing to a broader vision of peaceful coexistence. Building on the foundational 2018 OSCE Academic Network report “Religion and Security – Building in the OSCE Context”, which included key contributions from the International Dialogue Centre (KAICIID), and co-organised by the Centre for Religion, Human Values, and International Relations at Dublin City University and KAICIID, the side event ‘Faith and the Future’ will bring together experts and practitioners in the interface between religion, diplomacy, and international relations. The event draws on major OSCE commitments across its multidimensional concept of security and the KAICIID long-standing mission to end the abuse of religion to justify oppression, violence and conflict, while promoting interreligious and intercultural dialogue as effective tools to promote justice, peace and reconciliation.