



## Involving young people in the Swiss Chairmanship of the OSCE

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**Background:** Switzerland holds the Chairmanship of the OSCE in 2014. In accord with the leitmotif “Creating a Security Community for the Benefit of Everyone”, Switzerland pursues three overarching objectives:

- ⇒ fostering security and stability in Europe,
- ⇒ improving people’s lives, and
- ⇒ strengthening the OSCE’s capacity to act.

As part of its third goal, Switzerland wants to strengthen the voice of young people and enhance their involvement within OSCE structures. By increasing young people’s participation, Switzerland is pursuing two specific objectives: to give young people a voice in the OSCE and to give them the opportunity to get familiar with OSCE structures and -themes.

Youth is also one of the topics mentioned in the Joint Workplan which guides the consecutive OSCE Chairmanships of Switzerland (2014) and Serbia (2015).

**Model OSCE:** To achieve its goals towards the stronger involvement of youth, Switzerland is organizing a Model OSCE series in which young people from the OSCE participating States were invited to take part. The selection of participants was carried out through the networks of the Swiss National Youth Council, the implementing partner of the Swiss Chairmanship in this project.

The participating “Youth Ambassadors” are involved in the Swiss OSCE Chairmanship throughout the entire presidential year: By means of simulations of two specific OSCE decision-making bodies, the “Youth Ambassadors” become familiar with OSCE structures and -themes and will develop a “Model OSCE Youth Action Plan”. The “Youth Ambassadors” have the opportunity to acquire and develop various skills in diplomacy and negotiation, public speaking, communication, problem resolution. They will improve their teamwork and leadership abilities and meet other young people from the OSCE participating States.

### OSCE simulation sequences:

- The first simulation was held in Vienna from January 15-17, 2014, to coincide with the opening of the Swiss Chairmanship before the OSCE Permanent Council. The “Youth Ambassadors” kicked-off their negotiations on their “Model OSCE Youth Action Plan” in the framework of a simulated session of the “Model OSCE Permanent Council”.
- In view of the consecutive Chairmanship with Serbia, the second simulation will be held in Belgrade from July 08-10, 2014. The “Youth Ambassadors” will continue their negotiations and simulate a “Model OSCE Ministerial Council” by which they will finalize and adopt the “Model OSCE Youth Action Plan”.
- Within the framework of the Ministerial Council in Basel in December 2014, the “Youth Ambassadors” will present their negotiated outcome – the “Model OSCE Youth Action Plan”.

The “Model OSCE Youth Action Plan” developed by the “Youth Ambassadors” shall serve as an inspiration for the further incorporation of a youth perspective in the work of the OSCE.

Further information regarding the project can be found on the Web dossier of the Swiss OSCE Chairmanship: [www.eda.admin.ch/osce\\_2014](http://www.eda.admin.ch/osce_2014).

The OSCE Press and Publication Information Section produced a video podcast during the simulations in Vienna: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=GkSLcYv0aZ4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GkSLcYv0aZ4).