



REPORT OF OSCE PA SECRETARY GENERAL
ROBERTO MONTELLA
AUTUMN MEETING



Roberto Montella

17 November
2025

At the end of a remarkably successful Annual Session in Porto, the OSCE PA Declaration set out a clear vision with bold political support for the OSCE and its work. In this period of profound geopolitical challenges, the strong support of parliamentarians from across the OSCE region is an important message. The **broad-based support for Helsinki Principles, political leadership and multilateral diplomacy** as a basis for addressing our major challenges came through powerfully in our Porto Declaration.

At this difficult time for multilateralism in general and for the OSCE, it is vital for leaders to **consider how best the Organization can contribute to our collective security**. In recent months and years, we have regularly been challenged to **question whether the Parliamentary Assembly should serve primarily as a body that vocally criticizes shortcomings, or one that serves as a discussion forum to overcome these shortcomings**. Is the Assembly meant to maintain an active presence 'in the field' and engage in practical security and human rights work, or is the Assembly best-positioned to focus on parliamentary dialogue that backs this work up? President Joan Pons' governance paper and action plan, that build upon previous brainstorming efforts among the Assembly's leadership, are important additions to this deliberation on the OSCE and the PA's positioning and strengths. It is my hope that such debates will continue to ensure the OSCE PA is fully meeting its potential. The Secretariat stands ready and eager to support this work.

We owe our sincere **thanks to the hosts of our meetings in Portugal and Türkiye** this year for providing us with forums to continue our work. We also thank the parliaments of the **Netherlands and Andorra** for enabling us to continue our work and hosting us in 2026. I would reiterate our **pressing need to identify a host for our 2027 Annual Session** and would encourage all parliaments to consider the possibility to support Assembly work in this manner.

PA Contributions to the OSCE and regional security

In the weeks following our Annual Session, Members remained active in advocating for Assembly priorities, particularly in the context of **the 50th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act this summer**. **President Pere Joan Pons, President Emerita Pia Kauma, Special Representative on Youth Engagement Lucija Tacer** and others all contributed to ensuring that

the Assembly's ambitions on behalf of the OSCE were effectively conveyed.

In his first months as President, Pere Joan Pons has maintained a high level of activity that the Secretariat has been pleased to support. Most importantly, the President led a high-level delegation to Kyiv for the Assembly's **first in-person interaction with President Volodymyr Zelensky**. This was quickly followed up by the appointment of **Carina Ödebrink as Special Envoy on Russian Abductions and Deportations of Ukrainian Children**, with the clear intention to leverage the Assembly's tools to address this tragic challenge. Whether addressing the Verkhovna Rada in Kyiv, the Permanent Council in Vienna, the Human Dimension Conference in Warsaw, or numerous other forums, President Pons has been clear that support for Ukraine remains at the centre of the Assembly's focus. In the Secretariat we have provided continuous support to this work through substantive and practical support and sharpened messaging.

The Secretariat was also pleased to support the recent **visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina** of a large delegation led by President Pons. Over two days, the senior Assembly delegation met much of the country's leadership for substantive engagement and reiterated the need for inclusive political dialogue to find practical solutions to the country's population. **Our extensive interaction with the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina served as another reminder of why our Assembly has regularly referred to OSCE field missions as the 'crown jewels' of the OSCE's work. Coming in the 30th anniversary year of the Srebrenica genocide, our broad political support for the OSCE and its efforts to facilitate dialogue had particular resonance.** I thank the Members participating for their engagement, and the parliament of Luxembourg for its continued additional financial support for our work in South East Europe.

Such visits to field operations help to strengthen our relations with the OSCE's executive branch, and I know that the **OSCE Secretary General appreciates and values the political input of parliamentarians in the work of the Organization**. My colleagues, particularly in the Assembly's Vienna Office, continuously work to ensure that parliamentary input is targeted and impactful for the organization. We are acutely aware that parliamentarians' focus must always be their regular parliamentary duties, and work to communicate to all in the OSCE that parliamentarians' engagement in the OSCE is a privilege that should be valued and capitalized upon.

I continue to be impressed by the willingness of Members of Parliament to lend their time and effort to the service of the OSCE. All three elected leaders of our human rights committee, **Sargis Khandanyan, Christine Blower, and Carina Ödebrink travelled to Warsaw for the region's largest human right conference**, organized by the OSCE Chairpersonship and ODIHR. **Azay Guliyev has also worked to ensure that a parliamentary voice remains prominent in the OSCE's environmental and economic dimension** discussions and has led the way in co-ordinating with other Members on how to co-ordinate our efforts in these fields.

The OSCE PA again demonstrated its leading role in elections, working together with partners to observe the recent parliamentary **elections in Moldova**. **Special Co-ordinator Paula Cardoso and Linnéa Wickman**, Head of the OSCE PA delegation, headed the team of 108 parliamentarians and staff from the OSCE PA. The topic of disinformation campaigns in elections was once again prominent and will continue to be something for our Assembly to engage with in coming months and years. Our observation of the upcoming **elections in Kyrgyzstan is already underway, with Claude Haagen having visited Bishkek** earlier this month for a pre-visit. The Secretariat has prioritized such visits as an opportunity for mission leaders to acquaint themselves with dynamics weeks before election day, building expertise and contacts that strongly contribute to our impact during the final days of observation. Our team has also continued organizing events on the sidelines of our statutory meetings that enable more in-depth consideration of key themes and challenges that are facing countries in the field of elections, and I encourage all Members to take advantage of these opportunities.

The Assembly's ad hoc Committee on Countering Terrorism continued its leading role in developing parliamentary recommendations for the forthcoming review of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in 2026. **Committee Chair Kamil Aydın headed a team of five parliamentarians at a Global Parliamentary Conference** in Istanbul focused on counter-terrorism and the prevention of violent extremism. Our partnership with the UN has yielded important substantive results and led to UN financial support to our work in this field. Questions related to implementation of the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum and its implications for the entire OSCE region have been at the centre of conversation within our **ad hoc committee on Migration, Chaired by Farah Karimi**.

Special Representatives have continued to take the Assembly's messages to countries throughout the OSCE region. **Mark Pritchard** recently travelled to Stockholm for in-depth discussions related to security challenges in the Arctic. Vice-President **Irene Charalambides** had extensive discussions in both Podgorica and Brussels related to anti-corruption efforts. Vice-President **Kyriakos Hadjiyianni** travelled to Zagreb for continued engagement related to political co-operation in South East Europe. The Special Representative on Demographic Change and Security, Vice-President **Gudrun Kugler**, travelled to Tajikistan and met with parliamentary colleagues and the OSCE office in Dushanbe. Special Representative on the South Caucasus **Luis Graca** has continued his wide consultations, with a particular focus related to Georgia in recent months. Fifteen members of the **Network of Young Parliamentarians, headed by Lucija Tacer**, gathered recently in Cyprus for discussions related to regional security, youth participation, and socio-economic challenges.

In addition to the above highlights, the Secretariat team and I work continuously to support senior OSCE PA Members as they work on behalf of the Organization. With an **ongoing flow of information and advice to Bureau Members**, Special Representatives and others, as well as support to Members' media outreach, I am proud of the service the Secretariat team provides. They are responsible officials with a remarkable ability to adapt to the needs of Members, providing consistent and expert guidance to all Assembly members that far outstrips what could be expected from such a small Secretariat. The very positive feedback that I regularly receive on the team is an additional testimonial to the very professional work the Secretariat provides to Assembly Members.

Data compilation

Upon assuming the Presidency, Pere Joan Pons stressed his desire to **make full use of the expertise that parliamentarians from across the OSCE region** can bring to bear. To this end, and to ensure fully informed decisions, the Secretariat has prepared and shared **historical data regarding the election and appointments to senior OSCE PA positions**. It is evident from the data that some nationalities have assumed relatively more leadership positions whereas others have been under or entirely unrepresented. The compiled data aims to contribute to efforts to make the Assembly a body

that serves the purposes and needs of all its Members.

Budgetary and Secretariat administrative matters

While unusual, I feel it is appropriate to highlight the **extremely precarious financial situation of the Governmental/Executive side of the OSCE, which has not adopted a budget since 2021**. Working on monthly allotments, the Organization has effectively been in budget crisis mode for over four years. As I know that OSCE parliamentarians value the work of the OSCE, I take this opportunity to convey Secretary General Feridun Sinirlioglu's recent report that " **'Doing more with less' is simply not possible**. ... The absence of agreement is bringing us to the precipice. Beware that we cannot have this cost effective and efficient Organization operational and functional anymore, when we will need it the most." **I appeal to all Members: if you value this Organization, you must fund it.**

Thanks to the **excellent collaboration with Treasurer Johan Büser**, we have managed to ensure that our OSCE Parliamentary Assembly financial situation is less dire than the Governmental side, but it remains precarious. While the Standing Committee has consistently adopted a budget, the zero-growth policy adopted in the past year, in addition to the repeated shortfall of 6% due to the non-payment of financial dues by Russia, leaves us in a very difficult situation. Thanks to the hard work particularly of Deputy Secretary General Gustavo Pallares and Stephen Paul in the Secretariat and the generosity of a number of parliaments, led by Luxembourg, Denmark, Austria, Switzerland and others that are providing extra-budgetary and in-kind support, we have an unprecedented amount of additional funding. But even this **does not make up for the shortfall that we know we will continue to experience due to Russia's missing contribution. This is not sustainable.**

In the Secretariat we have always had a low-cost mentality, seeking savings and partnerships to cover costs wherever possible. I expect that this will again be demonstrated in the audit report that will be presented in the coming months. But this means that **we have little to no discretion to take on new tasks. Yet we are regularly called upon by parliamentarians for additional support and new tasks, without allocated funding**. The data in the attached activities overview demonstrates the strong and growing demand for engagement by parliamentarians, with a 22% annual average growth over the past 14 years. We would like to fulfil all mandates provided

to the Secretariat, but without funding it is impossible. For example, my office has taken significant steps to increase our multilingual services since the inclusion of this call in the Porto Declaration, but with no budgetary resources allocated we cannot properly fulfil this call, as we would like to.

On the eve of our meeting in Istanbul, our elections department, working together with several national delegations and the Parliamentary Support Team for Ukraine, are organizing a **major event related to preparations for elections in Ukraine**. I am proud that we are among the first organizations seriously examining this critical issue in a transparent manner. I am determined that our Assembly should have a major contribution to elections in Ukraine through robust observation, whenever they can be held. But I must also be transparent on this: this will be an expensive endeavour, and no funding has been allocated for this event that we know will happen and want to happen. It is my hope that the Standing Committee will address this and other funding shortfalls in the next budget cycle.

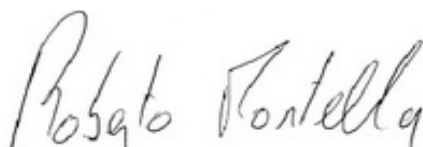
Conclusion

The vast array of challenges that OSCE PA Members are engaged with can at times appear daunting and even disheartening. However, I choose to take the opposite perspective: the fact that so many political leaders take time out of their daily schedules to dedicate to the OSCE is reassuring. **50 years on the principles of the Helsinki Final Act continue to live through the actions and dedication of these parliamentarians**. With very little real dialogue taking place within OSCE diplomatic circles, today more than ever, the parliamentary voice is needed in the OSCE process to ensure it remains responsive to the needs and wishes of citizens of OSCE countries. I and my colleagues in the OSCE PA Secretariat will continue our daily efforts to support this work.

Secretary General of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

Roberto Montella

Istanbul, 17 November 2025



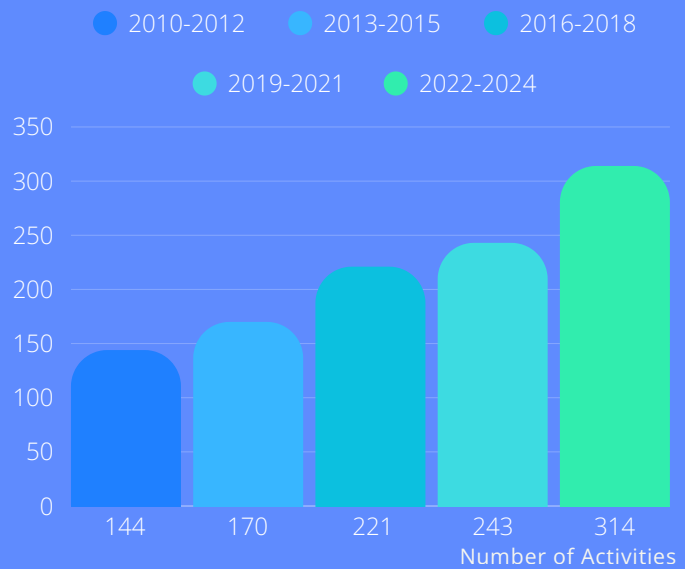


OSCE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY ACTIVITIES OVERVIEW

AVERAGE GROWTH

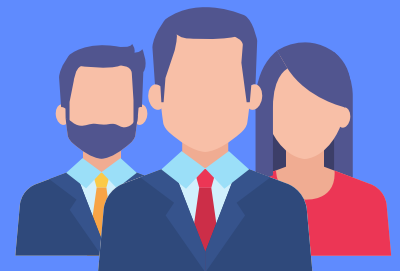
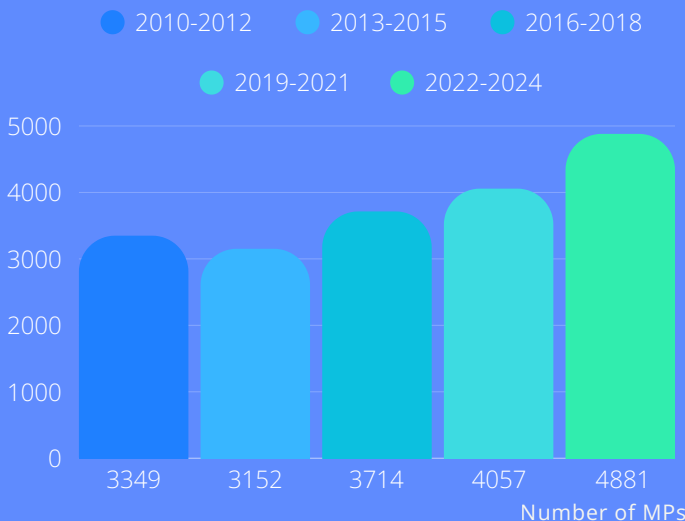


TRIENNIAL ACTIVITY GROWTH OVERVIEW



Activities more than **doubled** between 2010 and 2024 — an average **growth of 22%** every three years, reflecting steady expansion and rising engagement.

INCREASING ENGAGEMENT OF MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT



AVERAGE GROWTH



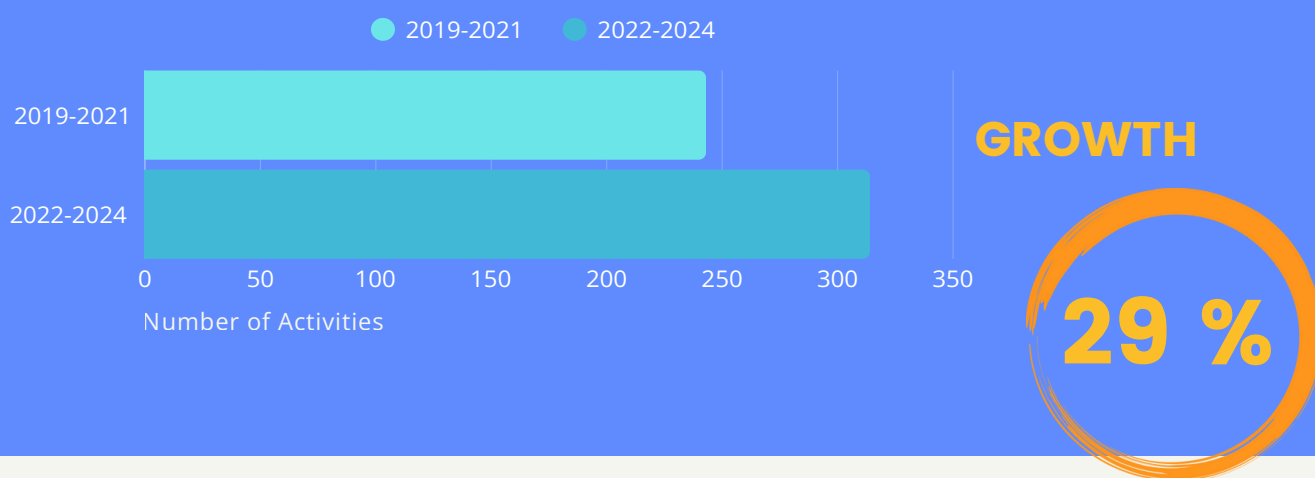
Participation **grew by over 45%** across the five triennial periods. Despite an early dip, engagement rebounded strongly, averaging **10% growth per cycle**, underscoring the Assembly's expanding reach and sustained momentum.

OSCE PA ACTIVITIES REACH RECORD LEVELS IN 2022–2024



The number of OSCE PA activities reached its **highest level** during 2022–2024, marking a **29% increase** compared to 2019–2021.

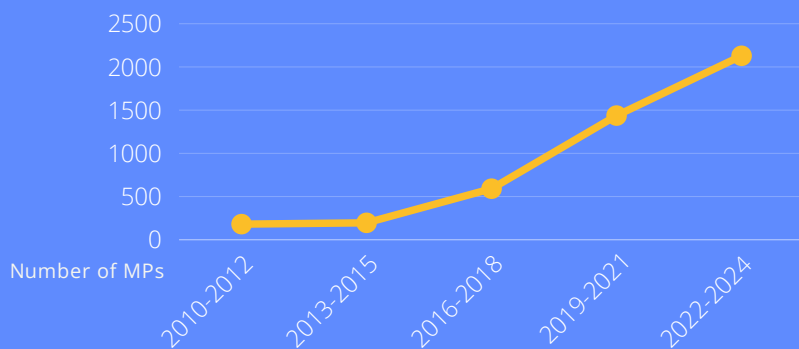
This steady upward trend highlights the Assembly’s **growing engagement and expanding international presence** throughout the years.



Whereas the Assembly’s primary role remains as a forum for dialogue, the level of activities between our main statutory meetings continues to **increase**.

Report of OSCE PA Secretary General Roberto Montella, 29 June 2025

ENGAGEMENT OF MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT IN FIELD AND THEMATIC ACTIVITIES



Over the past fifteen years, Members of Parliament have shown a remarkable increase in engagement across OSCE PA activities such as field visits, conferences, and thematic missions. Participation has grown by more than **tenfold** since 2010, reflecting a clear shift toward deeper, more dynamic involvement in the Assembly’s work and outreach.