

Western Balkans

With the continued presence of various peacekeeping and political missions from the United Nations, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and the European Union, the security situation in the Balkans remained relatively stable in 2012, with delicate gains toward political reforms achieved. In light of this progress, the EU Police Mission (EUPM) in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) and the International Civilian Office in Kosovo (ICO) were both closed in 2012.

However, fragility persisted in some parts of the region. Episodes of interethnic violence in both Kosovo and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) served to raise concern among international officials. Confrontations between NATO forces and Kosovo Serbs over roadblocks in northern Kosovo also continued to pose safety, security, and political challenges to the functioning of

international missions in the region. The EU-mediated dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina resolved various technical issues in 2012, but stepped-up efforts are required to solve the impasse in the north. While no major political crisis impacted the region in 2012, the reform process in countries such as BiH has stagnated, despite a strengthened EU presence, following the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty. Corruption and organized crime remain problems throughout the region, and progress on dealing with these issues has been slow.

Background

Following the disintegration of Yugoslavia in the early 1990s, numerous peacekeeping and political missions were deployed in the region. Many of these initiatives have been phased out, but Kosovo and BiH continue to host a number of peacekeeping forces. In BiH, in 2003–2004, the EUPM and the EU Force (EUFOR Althea) succeeded UN and NATO missions, which undertook police and military activities following the adoption of the Dayton Accords in 1995. The EUPM's central tasks focused on policing, monitoring, training and advising local forces, and combating organized crime and corruption. EUFOR Althea has focused its efforts on the provision of safety and security throughout BiH, compliance with the civilian aspects of the Dayton Accords, and training and capacity building for BiH military forces. As part of its security role, the mission maintains a police presence throughout the country and a troop presence that can be rapidly reinforced by EU member states.

EU Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUFOR Althea)

- Authorization Date 21 July 2004 (EU Council Joint Action 2004/570/CFSP), 22 November 2004 (UNSC Res. 1575)
- Start Date December 2004
- Operation Commander General Sir Richard Shirreff (United Kingdom)
- Force Commander Major-General Robert Brieger (Austria)
- Budget \$29.2 million (1 October 2011–30 September 2012)
- Strength as of 30 September 2012 Troops: 600



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Department of Field Support
Cartographic Section

Following the 1999 NATO campaign in Kosovo, the UN authorized deployment of a NATO peacekeeping force (KFOR) under Security Council Resolution 1244 to monitor the withdrawal of Serbian armed forces from Kosovo and maintain security. After almost eight years of UN administration, Kosovo's unilateral declaration of independence in February 2008 set the stage for the EU to deploy a rule of law mission with responsibilities in the areas of policing, justice, and customs. Serbia's consent to the reconfiguration of the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the deployment

of the EU Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) throughout the territory of Kosovo was attained in November 2008 through the so-called Six-Point Plan. EULEX, however, struggled to fully implement its mandate in northern Kosovo. KFOR continued to act as a peacekeeping force under Resolution 1244, and to support the Kosovo Security Force.

The UN maintains a small presence in the region primarily through UNMIK and the UN Office in Belgrade (UNOB). UNMIK's functions have been curtailed over time and are now mainly political, including ensuring a coordinated international civilian approach and

EU Police Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUPM)

- Authorization Date 11 March 2002 (EU Council Joint Action 2002/201/CFSP)
- Start Date January 2003
- Head of Mission Brigadier-General Stefan Feller (Germany)
- Budget \$12.52 million (1 October 2011–30 September 2012)
- Strength as of 30 September 2012 International Civilian Staff: 34
National Civilian Staff: 47

Note: The EUPM was terminated as of 30 June 2012.

NATO Kosovo Force (KFOR)

- Authorization Date 10 June 1999 (UNSC Res. 1244)
- Start Date June 1999
- Head of Mission Major-General Volker R. Halbauer (Germany)
- Strength as of 30 September 2012 Troops: 5,565

UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK)

- Authorization and Start Date 10 June 1999 (UNSC Res. 1244)
Note: Paragraph 19 of the resolution states that international civil and security presences are established for an initial period of twelve months, to continue thereafter unless the Security Council decides otherwise.
- SRSF Farid Zarif (Afghanistan)
- Budget \$47.0 million (1 July 2012–30 June 2013)
- Strength as of 31 October 2012 Military Observers: 8
Police: 8
International Civilian Staff: 134
National Civilian Staff: 210
UN Volunteers: 25

For detailed mission information see p. 369

serving as the main channel of communication between UNMIK and the government of Serbia.

The various political missions deployed in the region play different roles. The Office of the High Representative (OHR) in BiH, for example, is mandated to oversee the implementation of the civilian aspects of the Dayton Accords. Up until its closure following the end of Kosovo's four-year supervised independence period in September 2012, the ICO assisted Kosovo's government in achieving full independence. The OSCE also maintains a significant civilian presence in the region. Its missions in BiH, Kosovo, and FYROM focus on conflict prevention and ensuring peace. In Albania, Serbia, and Montenegro, OSCE missions work to consolidate democratic institutions, strengthen the rule of law, and provide security assistance.

Finally, the EU retains financial and political leverage through the EU accession framework and has appointed EU Special Representatives (EUSRs) to ensure EU coherence and assist local authorities in the process of EU accession. Since 2011, the EUSRs in BiH and Kosovo are no longer "double-hatted" as the High Representative in BiH and the International Civilian Representative in Kosovo.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

The overall security situation in BiH was relatively stable in 2012, but organized crime, corruption, and smuggling remain considerable challenges. Notwithstanding, the EU proceeded with the closing of the EUPM in June 2012, almost a decade following its inception. Born as the first EU crisis management operation, EUPM faced numerous challenges in implementing its mandate. In this context, the EU and the OSCE will continue to support the rule of law in BiH. The EU will work through the EU accession framework and a new law enforcement section, integrated into the EUSR structure, to assist local authorities in combating corruption and organized crime.¹ The OSCE will continue its programmatic activities on the rule of law and provide technical

mediation between the different ethnic communities in Kosovo. UNOB's chief activities center on conducting political reporting and

expertise to BiH authorities in the context of the EU-led dialogue. The EU will also continue to engage in peacekeeping activities; in November 2012 the UN Security Council extended the mandate of EUFOR Althea for another year as a preventive measure against future instability. It is anticipated that EUFOR, which deployed with an initial troop strength of 7,500, will continue to downsize from its current size of approximately 600.

The formation of a BiH government in December 2011, fourteen months after elections, was met with optimism by international officials. However, a new institutional crisis unfolded in May 2012 following the dissolution of the coalition government and the ensuing complex procedure associated with the reshuffling of government authorities. Little progress was thus made in implementing the “5+2 agenda” that lays out the requirements for the fulfillment of the civilian aspects of the Dayton Accords, including the registration of state and defense property and a positive assessment of the overall political situation in BiH by the Peace Implementation Council.² The closure of the OHR depends on the implementation of the remaining criteria.

In light of strong pressure from both the EU and NATO, progress on the registration of state and defense property appeared attainable in early 2012 with the signing of a decisive agreement on 9 March. The agreement, however, encountered numerous obstacles in the implementation phase, and local elections on 7 October served to harden party lines. Furthermore, a decision by the Constitutional Court in September regulating the distribution of property between the state and other authority levels remains to be implemented. As a result, and despite progress made in areas such as defense reform, supported by the assistance of NATO headquarters in Sarajevo,³ failure by Bosnian authorities to implement the March agreement is likely to delay discussions on the transfer of executive powers to local authorities and the NATO accession process.

The EU has continued to support the 5+2 agenda and BiH’s integration process into Euro-Atlantic institutions. The EU stepped up

EU Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX Kosovo)

• Authorization and Start Date	4 February 2008 (EU Council Joint Action 2008/124/CFSP)
• Head of Mission	Xavier Bout de Marnhac (France)
• Budget	\$182.36 million (1 October 2011–30 September 2012)
• Strength as of 30 September 2012	Civilian Police: 965 International Civilian Staff: 223 National Civilian Staff: 938

Office of the High Representative (OHR)

• Authorization Date	21 November 1995 (General Framework Agreement for Peace [Dayton Accords])
• Start Date	January 1996
• High Representative	Valentin Inzko (Austria)
• Strength as of 30 September 2012	International Staff: 25 National Staff: 131

International Civilian Office (ICO)

• Authorization and Start Date	28 February 2008 (2008/123/CFSP)
• International Civilian Representative	Pieter Feith (Netherlands)

Note: The ICO was terminated 10 September 2012.

its leadership role through the EUSR, who has been “double-hatted” as the head of the EU delegation since 2011. In June 2012 the EU presented a roadmap to motivate and guide BiH’s reform efforts designed to achieve candidate status for EU integration by the end of 2012. The OSCE mission, for its part, has continued to assist BiH in meeting its commitments for Euro-Atlantic integration and the consolidation of democratic institutions. Notwithstanding these efforts, nationalist rhetoric, mostly associated with the electoral campaign, has been on the rise. Failure to reach an agreement on constitutional reform

OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina (OSCE BiH)

- Authorization Date 8 December 1995 (MC[5].DEC/1)
- Head of Mission Ambassador Fletcher M. Burton (United States)
- Budget \$18.9 million (1 January 2012–31 December 2012)
- Strength as of 30 September 2012 International Staff: 68
National Staff: 418.5^a

Note: a. OSCE BiH has 418 full-time and 1 part-time national staff.

EU Special Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina

- Authorization Date 25 June 2012 (Council Decision 2012/330/CFSP), 11 March 2002 (Joint Action 2002/211/CFSP)
- Start Date 1 July 2012
- EUSR Peter Sørensen (Denmark)
- Budget \$6.5 million (1 October 2011–30 September 2012)
- Strength as of 30 September 2012 International Staff: 21
National Staff: 41

related to the implementation of a ruling by the European Court of Human Rights caused BiH to miss its first EU roadmap deadline in August.

Kosovo

Kosovo's unilateral declaration of independence in February 2008 and Serbia's refusal to recognize it contributed to an already complex political environment for international organizations. The inherent challenges were particularly evident in northern Kosovo, where Kosovo Serbs have rejected Pristina's authority and remained largely under Serbian control. Following a nonbinding opinion by the International Court of Justice in July 2010 stating that Kosovo's unilateral declaration of independence did not violate international law, the EU, with UN approval, initiated a dialogue

in March 2011 between Belgrade and Pristina to promote cooperation. Despite some initial successes including an agreement on civil registries, and freedom of movement in July 2011, disagreements over custom stamps and management of crossing points and a Kosovo special police operation at the crossing points in the north contributed to the creation of a major crisis in northern Kosovo.

On 22 July 2011, Kosovo authorities unilaterally boycotted Serbian goods and attempted to take control of two northern boundary-crossing points. Tensions mounted as Kosovo Serbs organized roadblocks, which led to the exchange of small-arms fire with Kosovo special police forces. Notwithstanding the lifting of mutual trade embargos in September 2011, tensions have remained elevated, resulting in several confrontations between Kosovo Serbs and KFOR officers while the latter engaged in dismantling roadblocks. An agreement that allowed joint control over the boundary-crossing points by officials including Kosovo police and customs officers, but only as observers, was achieved in December 2011. While some barricades were removed, calls by Serbian president Boris Tadic to dismantle all roadblocks were ignored by Kosovo Serbs.⁴ Further confrontations and interethnic violence flared up again in June and July 2012. After a year's delay, the boundary-crossing agreement reached in 2011 was implemented in December 2012, with border authorities from Kosovo and Serbia working together at a number of border crossings.

EULEX continues to struggle to operate in northern Kosovo, as the mission is seen by ethnic Serbs to be supporting the extension of Pristina's authority in the north. On 7 September, a group of people opened fire on Kosovo police and EULEX vehicles, resulting in one injury. EULEX has called upon Serbian authorities to allow for the resumption of the freedom of movement in northern Kosovo.⁵

Despite ongoing instability and Pristina's inability to exert control in northern Kosovo, the transfer of executive powers to local au-

thorities has started to move forward. The International Steering Group agreed to end its four-year international supervision in Kosovo in September in spite of the ICO's poor record in pushing Pristina to implement adopted legislation as the basis of a multiethnic state.

EULEX's mandate has been extended until 2014, but with a reduced footprint for the mission, from 3,000 to approximately 2,200 personnel. However, a recent critical report on the mission's work by the European Court of Auditors recommended EULEX personnel be increased in order to better fulfill its mandate. In light of progress registered in the areas of customs and police outside northern Kosovo, the mission will focus on strengthening the judicial system and assisting local authorities in combating corruption and organized crime, which continue to be significant issues.

NATO renewed its commitments to Kosovo in May, agreeing to maintain the size of KFOR at 6,000 troops. While NATO announced plans to reduce the size of the mission to 2,000 troops in May 2011, these plans are on hold until the security situation improves.⁶ OMIK will also maintain its significant engagement of approximately 600 personnel and field offices across Kosovo and continue to support institution and democracy building; monitoring, protecting, and promoting of human and community rights; and strengthening the security and public safety sector in Kosovo.

Plans by Serbia to include Kosovo in Serbian local elections in May 2012 caused considerable tensions with the Kosovo government. International organizations in Kosovo also expressed objections to these plans, and UNMIK ruled out organizing local elections in Kosovo "due to circumstances on the ground."⁷ At the same time, in response to consistent calls from various stakeholders in the region, both local and international, the OSCE offered its expertise and assistance in facilitating balloting for the Serbian parliamentary and presidential elections in Kosovo. After extensive consultations, an understanding to this effect

was reached on 30 April. In addition to providing voting materials, OMIK operated ninety polling stations around Kosovo, contributing to defusing tensions and ensuring the peaceful conclusion of the vote on 20 May.

UNMIK's most prominent efforts have centered on working as a contact point between the different communities in northern Kosovo. These developments have included direct engagement with local communities and international officials, and attempts to decrease tensions and allow for the resumption of the freedom of movement. The future role of UNMIK remains uncertain. In an attempt to strengthen its footprint in northern Kosovo, Pristina indicated its desire to close UNMIK's administration in Mitrovica, which has administered the northern part of Mitrovica municipality since 2002, and stopped providing

EU Special Representative for Kosovo

- Authorization Date 25 January 2012 (Council Decision 2012/39/CFSP), 4 February 2008 (EU Council Joint Action 2008/123/CFSP)
- Start Date 1 February 2012
- EUSR Samuel Žbogar (Slovenia)
- Budget \$3.1 million (1 February 2012–30 June 2013)
- Strength as of 30 September 2012 International Staff: 10
National Staff: 13

OSCE Mission in Kosovo (OMIK)

- Authorization and Start Date 1 July 1999 (Permanent Council Decision no. 305)
- Head of Mission Ambassador Jean-Claude Schlumberger (France)
- Budget \$28.5 million (1 January 2012–31 December 2012)
- Strength as of 30 September 2012 International Staff: 141
National Staff: 474

OSCE Mission to Skopje

- Authorization Date 14 August 1992 (15-CSO/Journal no. 2, Annex 1 [as CSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje]), 18 September 1992 (16-CSO/Journal no. 3, Annex 1), 6 November 1992 (17-CSO/Journal no. 2, Annex 3), 16 December 2010 (Permanent Council Decision no. 977 [renamed as OSCE Mission to Skopje])
- Head of Mission Ambassador Ralf Breth (Germany)
- Budget \$8.9 million (1 January 2012–31 December 2012)
- Strength as of 30 September 2012 International Staff: 44
National Staff: 111

OSCE Presence in Albania

- Authorization Date 27 March 1997 (Permanent Council Decision no. 160)
- Start Date 3 April 1997
- Head of Presence Ambassador Eugen Wollfarth (Germany)
- Budget \$4.1 million (1 January 2012–31 December 2012)
- Strength as of 30 September 2012 International Staff: 21
National Staff: 64

OSCE Mission to Montenegro

- Authorization Date 29 June 2006 (Permanent Council Decision no. 732)
- Acting Head of Mission Ambassador Waldemar Figaj (Poland)
- Budget \$3 million (1 January 2012–31 December 2012)
- Strength as of 30 September 2012 International Staff: 11
National Staff: 31

funds to the office's budget. A regional representation agreement between Belgrade and Pristina in February—within the EU-mediated dialogue—removed UNMIK's responsibility

for representing Kosovo institutions at multi-lateral forums in the Balkan region.

Other Regional Developments

The OSCE maintains an important presence in FYROM, lending its assistance toward the implementation of the 2001 Ohrid Agreement.⁸ The mission is currently focused on confidence building, police training, border management, the rule of law, electoral assistance, public administration, and education. Renewed ethnic tension in early 2012, partially resulting from the shooting death of two Albanian citizens at the hands of a Macedonian police officer, and the murder of five Macedonian citizens under inexplicable circumstances, yielded one of the worst episodes of ethnic tension in FYROM since 2001.

In this political climate, the OSCE Mission to Skopje has stepped up efforts to support judicial practice in addressing hate crimes and hate speech. The mission has also worked in close cooperation with the United States, the head of the EU delegation, and NATO headquarters in Skopje (renamed NATO Liaison Office in Skopje in April 2012).⁹ Acting collectively as the "Security Principals," these organizations have condemned episodes of interethnic violence and called upon citizens to remain calm and help maintain peace.

In Albania, Serbia, and Montenegro, the OSCE's activities have focused on the further promotion and consolidation of democratic institutions, the rule of law, human and minority rights, media development, and security. Albania has been mired in a stalled political crisis resulting from disputed elections in 2009, which in early 2011 led to massive demonstrations that turned violent. Despite the political insecurity in Albania, the OSCE mission helped implement much-needed electoral reform with the support of the two major parties, following the presidential election in June 2012. However, additional challenges remain with respect to implementation, particularly in the context of the upcoming 2013 parliamentary elections. The OSCE has also

continued to provide assistance to police forces alongside other actors such as the EU.

The missions in Serbia and Montenegro have focused on advising the governments on the implementation of laws and monitoring democratic institutions. Elections in Serbia in May and Montenegro in October 2012 were deemed open and competitive by the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights.¹⁰ It was noted, however, that additional efforts to enhance confidence and transparency were needed, particularly in reference to the role of the media. Restrictions on the freedom of media and the prevalence of organized crime and corruption continued to pose significant challenges in FYROM, Albania, Montenegro, Serbia, and Kosovo.

Conclusion

While corruption, organized crime, and restrictions on media continue to pose important challenges to the consolidation of democratic institutions in Albania, Serbia, and Montenegro, volatile ethnic relations in FYROM, BiH, and Kosovo represent the greatest risks to regional stability. The prospect of EU accession has served to motivate and promote stability, but only Serbia and Montenegro remain on track for EU membership.¹¹ FYROM has wanted to start accession talks since 2005, whereas BiH has yet to be accepted as a candidate country for EU accession following years of delayed and inadequate reforms. Kosovo took important steps toward EU accession in 2012, and the closure of the International Civilian Office was a significant step in the transition process. However, Kosovo remains plagued by a volatile security situation, weak democratic structures, widespread corruption, and a record of poor legislative implementation.

The violent episodes in FYROM and Kosovo have demonstrated the potential for disruptive ethnic tension with conceivable regional repercussions. In Kosovo, the EU-led initiative to promote dialogue vis-à-vis northern Kosovo offers room for optimism, but



EULEX/Enisa Kasemi

The head of EULEX, Xavier de Marnhac, together with Rene Boumendil, deputy head of the Police Component in EULEX, talk to the Kosovo Police office during their visit to the border crossing point Hani i Elezit/General Jankovic, 24 January 2012.

OSCE Mission to Serbia

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| • Authorization Date | 11 January 2011 (Permanent Council Decision no. 401 [as OSCE Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia]), 13 February 2003 (Permanent Council Decision no. 533 [renamed as OSCE Mission to Serbia and Montenegro]), 29 June 2006 (Permanent Council Decision no. 733 [renamed as OSCE Mission to Serbia]) |
| • Head of Mission | Ambassador Paula Thiede (United States) |
| • Budget | \$9.5 million (1 January 2012–31 December 2012) |
| • Strength as of 30 September 2012 | International Staff: 30
National Staff: 121 |

many challenges lie ahead. While the new Serbian leadership has indicated a willingness to fulfill previous agreements and to engage in dialogue (with the goal of achieving a special status, yet to be defined, for northern

Kosovo), Pristina has been tentative in its dealings with Belgrade. However, an important step was reached in December when Serbia and Kosovo agreed to appoint liaison offers to represent their respective countries in Belgrade and Pristina. In BiH, ongoing nationalist rhetoric, largely related to local elections, has continued to cause concern among inter-

national officials, raising questions about the eventual transfer of executive power to local authorities. Further diplomatic pressure and a strengthened, coordinated international engagement by the European Union, the United States, NATO, and the OSCE is required to effectively address the region's political, institutional, and democratic challenges.

Notes

1. Council of the European Union, "EU Completes Its Police Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina," 30 June 2012, http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/131175.pdf.
2. Registering immovable defense property as state property is also a critical condition for BiH to activate NATO's Membership Action Plan.
3. NATO Headquarters in Sarajevo, "JFC Naples Commander Cites 'Progress in BiH Defence Reform,'" 5 July 2012, <http://www.nhqs.nato.int/hqsarajevo/page372802322.aspx>.
4. A referendum held in February 2012 in northern Kosovo with no support from President Tadic represented another challenge to his leadership.
5. EULEX, "De Marnhac Visits Belgrade," press release, 23 February 2012, <http://www.eulex-kosovo.eu/en/pressreleases/0237.php>.
6. NATO, "Chicago Summit Declaration," press release, 20 May 2012, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_87593.htm?mode=pressrelease.
7. "UNMIK Rules Out Role in Serb Elections in Kosovo," *BalkanInsight*, 23 March 2012, <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/unmik-says-no-to-local-elections-in-kosovo>. On 21 March, Serbian authorities sent a letter to UNMIK requesting it to carry out local elections in Kosovo under the UNMIK framework and in line with Security Council Resolution 1244. On 22 March, UNMIK responded that the conditions for this were not in place and that UNMIK would not involve itself in the organization of local elections.
8. The Ohrid Agreement was an EU-sponsored peace accord that helped avert ethnic conflict between the Macedonian majority and the Albanian minority.
9. The mission of NATO's liaison office in Skopje is to advise the government authorities on military aspects of security sector reform.
10. OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, International Election Observation, Republic of Serbia, "Statement of Preliminary Findings and Conclusions," 7 May 2012, <http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/90335>.
11. Serbia gained candidate status in February and Montenegro initiated accession talks in June. The European Commission, in its 2012 progress report on Albania, recommended that Albania be granted EU candidate status, subject to completion of key reform measures.