

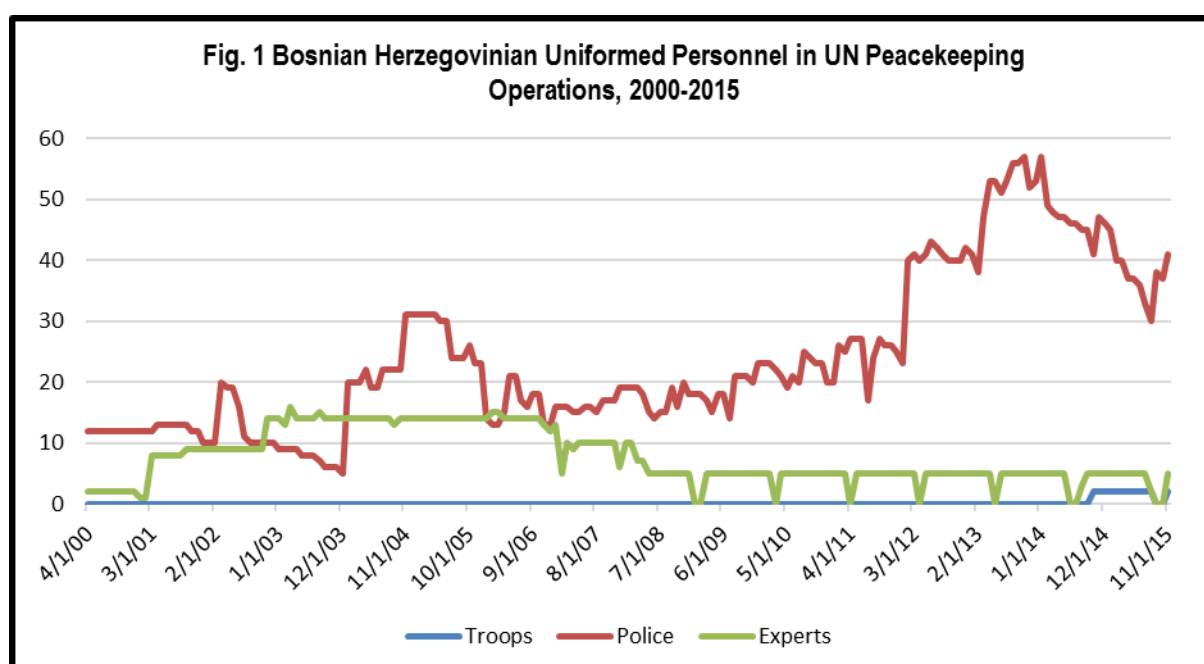
## Contributor Profile: Bosnia and Herzegovina

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<u>Active Armed Forces</u>	<u>Helicopters and fixed-wing transport</u>	<u>Defense Budget</u>	<u>UN Peacekeepers</u>	<u>UN Contribution Breakdown</u>	<u>Other Significant Deployments</u>
Active (2015) 10,500	0 Attack helicopters	2015:\$159m (1.1 % of GDP) (est)	48 (10 female) 31 Nov. 2015	MINUSMA 2 troops MONUSCO 5 experts	Afghanistan (Resolute Support) 57 personnel
Air Force and Air Defence Brigade: 800	13/21 Heavy/medium transport helicopters	2014:\$227m (1.15% of GDP)	Ranking: 81 <sup>st</sup>	UNAMA 1 police UNFICYP 9 police UNMIL 6 police UNMISS 25 police	
World Ranking: (size): <b>108<sup>th</sup></b>		2013:\$206m (1.1% of GDP)			
		2012: \$231m (1.33% of GDP)			
Defence spending / Troops: <b>US\$20,636</b> (compared to a global average of approximately US\$65,905)					

### Part 1: Recent Trends

Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) started contributing to UN peacekeeping missions in April 2000 with 12 military experts. Since then, BiH has gradually increased its contribution to 52 military experts and police officers (May 2014). BiH emerged as a state from of the worst violence seen in the Yugoslav wars during the 1990s, and is now steadily trying to change its status from being a security consumer to a security provider. Currently BiH contributes to three UN missions in Africa and Europe (UNFICYP, UNMIL and UNMISS) (see Fig. 1). In addition, it should be emphasized that BiH deployed 5 military experts on 14 November 2015 to MONUSCO, which is not reflected in Fig. 1.



BiH's contributions to peacekeeping operations take place in the context of ongoing reforms to its security sector, particularly within the defense sector, which has had a great influence on the operational capacities of the Armed Forces. As per the Defence white paper of Bosnia and Herzegovina (2005), the primary objective of the defense reform process was the establishment and strengthening of the state-level institutions which could function as the supreme authority on defense-related issues. Consequently, activities have focused on increasing the authority of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina as the supreme commander of the BiH Armed Forces, expanding the role the Parliamentary Assembly in order to exercise effective democratic control over the Armed Forces, and establishing state-level defence institutions capable of supporting the Presidency in exercising command and control over the Armed Forces. To illustrate the complexity of defence reform in BiH and its subsequent effects on the functionality of the defense sector as a whole, it is worth mentioning that the current BiH Armed Forces have been formed of ex-warring factions – the Army of the Republic of Srpska and the Army of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina – two entities within BiH which had full control over their forces until the last defence reform in 2005.

The Law on Defence of Bosnia and Herzegovina (2005) states that the mission of the Armed Forces shall be, *inter alia*, “participation in collective security operations, peace support and self-defense operations.” In accordance with this law, BiH deployed its first contingent within NATO's Operation Enduring Freedom, where from mid-2005 until the end of 2008, BiH forces made eight rotations, involving a total of 337 soldiers. On average, approximately 40 troops were deployed at any given time on this mission. Currently, the largest BiH military contingent in a peace operation is the NATO mission Resolute Support in Afghanistan with 57 troops (see Fig. 2).

Figure 2: BiH contributions to non-UN missions

Mission	Contribution	Duration
Iraq – Enduring Freedom	EOD platoon Overall 337 soldiers	2005-2008
Afghanistan – ISAF	10 Staff officers Infantry platoon - 45 infantry troops Military police contingent – 26 troops	2010-2014
Afghanistan – Resolute Support	10 Staff officers Infantry platoon - 45 infantry troops Technical force protection team – 2 NCOs	2014-current

Furthermore, BiH has committed to a presence in Afghanistan after 2014 as part of the mission Resolute Support. Membership in NATO and the EU, as well as a strong regional cooperation and participation in other European and Euro-Atlantic integration processes, continues to be a main foreign policy goal of Bosnia and Herzegovina. As such, even though the Defence Policy (2008) continues to be oriented towards the development of effective and modern defence capabilities that would be able to contribute to international peace support operations, BiH prioritizes participation in NATO missions and has not seriously considered deploying its military contingents to UN missions. However, the decision of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to establish a new diplomatic position of liaison officer with DPKO within the Permanent Mission of BiH to the UN, could lead to a gradual changing of this attitude concerning its contribution to the UN peacekeeping operations.

## Part 2: Decision-Making Process

Under the BiH Constitution, which is an Annex to General Framework Agreement for Peace

in Bosnia and Herzegovina signed in Dayton (USA) in 1995 (also known as the Dayton Peace Agreement), all three members of the collective BiH Presidency perform the function of the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces. As per The Law on Defence of Bosnia and Herzegovina (2005), the chain of command goes through the Minister of Defence to the Chief of the Joint Staff. Authority for the deployment of the armed forces on home territory and in peace support operations outside the country lies in the hands of the BiH Presidency, which acts only on the basis of consensus. The BiH Parliamentary Assembly then needs to approve the Presidency decision on the deployment of armed forces, police officers, civil servants and others in peace support operations within 60 days of the decision being taken. The Law on Participation of the MoD and AFBiH and Police Personnel in Peace Support Operations and Other Missions Abroad (2005) defines the authorities, obligations and other issues relevant to this area. Based on previous experience in sending contingents to the NATO/ISAF mission, the average time for making the decision to deploy troops to a peacekeeping mission takes about 4-5 months after launching the initiative or request for a contribution to a peacekeeping mission.

The BiH Parliamentary Assembly oversees the armed forces. The Parliamentary Joint Committee on Defence and Security holds annual hearings on the future defence budget projections, and also audits the current defence budget and requests detailed reports from the MoD, as necessary. The Parliamentary Joint Committee, on behalf of the Parliament, also regularly receives and discusses reports prepared by BiH MoD about the participation of a contingent in a peace support operation. The position of the Parliamentary Military Commissioner, was established in 2010. Competencies of the Parliamentary Military Commissioner include investigation of specific issues, under the direction of the BiH Parliamentary Assembly and BiH Joint Committee on Defense and Security, and investigation of circumstances that indicate violations of human rights and freedoms of military personnel and cadets, based on complaints or the Commissioner's assessment.

### **Part 3: Rationales for Contributing**

*Political Rationales:* The participation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in peacekeeping missions is driven by political commitments which are focused on [the accession of BiH to NATO](#), and its desire to change its national reputation from being a security “consumer” to a security “provider.” At the same time, [its ability to contribute to peace operations](#) is an indicator of the success of the implemented reforms of the defense sector in which various international actors invested considerable resources. In addition, it is very important for Bosnia and Herzegovina to present the country as a credible actor on the international stage which can fulfil its obligations as a member of the UN, and be a credible candidate for membership to NATO and the EU. However, The Defense Policy (2008) puts full-fledged NATO membership as the first priority, which would, by definition, help the protection of its sovereignty and territorial integrity. Taking into account BiH's policy priority to join NATO as well as contribute to NATO missions, it seems that BiH has put its integration in euro-atlantic organizations above its contribution to UN missions.

*Economic Rationales:* Taking into account the very difficult economic situation in post-war Bosnia and Herzegovina, where the [average unemployment rate](#) for the last five years is above 40%, the economic rationales for contributing to UN-led missions are seen to be relevant mainly at the individual level. Personnel serving on missions receive *per diem* pay, which is significantly higher than average pay in the country. However, the high unemployment rate and limited sources of state income might be an incentive for decision makers in BiH to further align their public policies towards increasing participation in UN peacekeeping missions.

*Security Rationales:* Taking into account the fact that the BiH Armed Forces represent a mixture of three ex-warring factions, the deployment of ethnically mixed contingents represents a model of reconciliation. It is believed that the goodwill that is generated during deployments would spread out into society and reduce the security risks of potential internal conflict in the future.<sup>1</sup> Alongside the internal security rationale, it should be kept in mind that Bosnia and Herzegovina is a small country positioned within the still unstable region of the Western Balkans. Therefore, making international cooperation a hallmark of its foreign policy can help it to advance its security interests and its priority foreign policy objectives – that is, becoming a full fledged member of NATO.

*Institutional Rationales:* Individual participation in multinational missions has not been formally recognized or integrated within the career structure or promotion process. In the worst cases, returnees from peace operations appear to have actually missed out on promotion opportunities or favorable assignments due to their participation in overseas missions. This has led to a reticence amongst some personnel to volunteer for multinational operations.

*Normative Rationales:* Compared to other countries, Bosnia and Herzegovina became a member of the UN relatively recently (in 1992) and as such it recently took on those responsibilities. Thus, if BiH intends to be perceived as a responsible and capable member of the UN, contributing to peace operations could be seen as the best way to demonstrate its intentions and capabilities.

#### **Part 4: Barriers to Contributing**

*Alternative political or strategic priorities:* Membership in NATO and the EU and strong regional cooperation and participation in other European and Euro-Atlantic integration processes continue to be the main foreign policy preferences of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Integration into NATO seems to be the fastest opportunity for involvement in international alliances, and therefore the priority is directed towards fulfilling the obligations of full membership in this organization. This foreign policy orientation is understandable because NATO membership for a post-war country such as BiH is seen to bring with it a strong collective security umbrella in an unstable region which is the case of the Western Balkans.

*Financial costs:* The current size of defense expenditures continues to be a great burden for the BiH central government, which consequently could have negative influence on its contribution and participation in the UN-led peacekeeping operations. Joint deployments with other partner countries might be the only realistic option for BiH to increase its contribution to UN-led operations. BiH's modest participation in UN peacekeeping operations does not fully reimburse all costs related to UN operations. Current participation in the NATO-led missions is mostly logistically supported by other NATO members, under whose auspices BiH took part in peacekeeping missions (e.g. U.S. or Denmark). The possibility of reimbursing the cost of participating in UN missions will certainly represent an incentive for BiH troops, but at the same time it would mean that BiH's equipment and infrastructure must reach the required standards to participate in UN missions. The current BiH economic opportunities are far from enough to support the modernization programs necessary for the development of usable and sustainable military capabilities for peacekeeping missions.

*Discomfort with the expanding UN peacekeeping agenda:* Once deployed there are no legal constraints given by existing doctrinal/operational manuals that would prevent contingents of the BiH Armed Forces taking part in "robust" peacekeeping operations.

*Absence of pressure to contribute:* Since 2003, the leading role in peacebuilding in Bosnia and Herzegovina rests with the EU, which has pressured BiH politicians to be more oriented towards the EU and NATO, rather than towards the UN. On the other hand, the UN has not conducted significant engagement with BiH, leaving the process of state-building to the other international and regional organizations.

*Difficult domestic politics:* Taking into account the negative experience of the majority of people in Bosnia and Herzegovina with how the UN handled its war, politicians could have a certain discomfort engaging more with the UN and providing peacekeepers for UN missions. According to some polls, the UN was ranked as the third organization in which BiH citizens have the most confidence, after the EU and NATO.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has been going through the most challenging political period since the war ended. Internal political tension keeps the state almost non-functional. The deterioration of the political situation has continued since 2006. After the last general elections held in October 2010, it took more than a year to form the new BiH Government. Even after the formation of the government and during the entire election cycle, constantly changing positions within the government caused an inability to achieve any political decisions regarding BiH's progress towards EU and NATO membership. BiH is significantly lagging behind neighboring countries in this regard, which are paving their way towards Euro-Atlantic integration.

#### **Part 5: Current Challenges and Issues**

The government of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the last six months has been working on increasing its military contribution to the UN through its plans to send 10 staff officers to the UN mission in Mali (MINUSMA), which reflects its commitment to continue taking part in peacekeeping missions. However, only two have been deployed for a one year rotation. One of the factors influencing the final decision on when the deployment would take place is the outcome of the current debate on BiH's future commitment to the NATO ISAF mission in Afghanistan. Thus, it remains unknown when the deployment of these UN military experts will take place.

There are several factors influencing decision-making on peacekeeping. The first is the unstable political situation, which is a result of disagreement between ruling parties on the future constitutional perspectives and common vision of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The complex political situation will remain one of the key factors complicating decision-making on peacekeeping in the period after general elections held last October 2014.

A second factor influencing decision-making is related to the economic situation in BiH, which is very fragile and weak. High employment and lower foreign investment drive have produced low GDP and has a direct impact on the defense budget, which is lower in 2014 than in previous years. Although the economic situation in BiH is showing early signs of recovery after the global financial recession, the impact of recent flooding and aftermath recovery (with an estimated cost over \$2bn) would certainly keep the defence budget even lower than in 2014, despite the fact that the Armed Forces played one of the key roles in responding to this natural disaster. Having said that, the current defense budget leaves little chance for deployment of BiH contingents to UN peacekeeping missions.

#### **Part 6: Key Champions and Opponents**

Within the current government of Bosnia and Herzegovina it seems that the Ministry of Security of BiH, with its current contribution has shown leadership in the deployment of police officers on UN missions. Having said that, it should be noted that new proposal from

Ministry of Security to deploy additional police officers in the UN Mission to Haiti, was approved by the Presidency in November 2015. The number of police officers to be deployed to Haiti is [still to be confirmed](#). At the same time, [the Minister of Defence](#) is more focused on creating conditions for BiH to become a NATO member. However, the recently signed [General Framework](#) for participation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in EU-led crisis management missions indicates that BiH's Ministry of Defence intends to widen its contribution to peace operations beyond NATO-led ones.

The Peace Support Operations Training Centre in Sarajevo, in cooperation with the [Centre for Security Studies](#), organized a seminar in 2013 on the topic of expanding national contributions to peacekeeping. However, so far there has been no action from the political leadership to increase BiH contributions to UN missions. Currently, the UN Development Programme office in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been working with the government to help galvanize BiH's contributions to peacekeeping operations.

### **Part 7: Capabilities and Caveats**

According to some assessments, the BiH Armed Forces has the potential to increase participation in international military operations up to c.200 personnel in next 2-3 years, if sufficient financial resources are available.<sup>2</sup> Those deployable troops could consist of an explosive ordinance disposal platoon, military police platoon and 1-2 light infantry platoons (all elements have gathered experience in ISAF and the US-led campaign in Iraq). However, the range of increasingly obsolete and maintenance-heavy equipment in the inventory of the armed forces continues to complicate logistics support. The alarming situation regarding transportation capabilities has not improved; the fleet of different types of cargo vehicles is reaching the end of their useful life and unless modernized, the armed forces might lose their transport capability once the spare parts, currently obtained through the cannibalization of other vehicles, are no longer available. No meaningful deployable Combat Service Support assets are available. Units deployed abroad therefore rely on support available in the theatre of operations, which, given the small size of deployed contingents, is for the time being the most cost-effective solution. Nevertheless, deployable capabilities need to be enhanced.

### **Part 8: Further Reading**

*Bosnia and Herzegovina: 15 years of participations of the Armed Forces in Peace Support Operations 2000-2015* (Brouchure of the Ministry of Defence and the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2015).

*Supporting Peace: 15 years of participations of Police Officers from Bosnia and Herzegovina in the UN Peacekeeping Missions* (Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2015).

*Brochure of the Ministry of Defense and the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina* (2013).

Centre for Security Studies, *Almanac on Security Sector Oversight in the Western Balkans* (2012).

Dautović Kenan, *Security Policies in the Western Balkans: Bosnia and Herzegovina* (2010).

*Law on Defence of Bosnia and Herzegovina* (MoD Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2005).

*Defence White Paper of Bosnia and Herzegovina* (MoD Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2005).

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### **Notes**

<sup>1</sup> Based on interviews conducted with officers of the BiH Armed Forces who served in ISAF.

<sup>2</sup> Unofficial information provided during discussion with an Army officer during Seminar on "Perspectives on increasing BiH contribution to UN missions," held in Konjic (BiH), 29 May 2013.