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Case Study

**The Organization for Security and
Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)
and its Contribution to the Stabilization of
Central and Eastern European Countries**

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Summary

With the end of the Cold War, the focus on stabilization—a prerequisite for peace and security in Europe—has shifted from interstate to intrastate sources of conflict. To deal with these challenges, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) has established important institutions (e.g. the High Commissioner on National Minorities and the Representative on Freedom of the Media) and has fielded numerous missions that have helped to improve conflict prevention and to rebuild war-torn societies. With its comprehensive security agenda, a primarily civilian focus, and a light institutional structure, the OSCE is one of the most cost-effective (albeit easily sidelined) international organizations in the area of providing stability in zones of turmoil.

Introduction: Why the Stabilization of Countries is Important

The stabilization of countries is important in order to guarantee peace and security, both national and regional. Violent conflicts, economic underdevelopment, and power disparities can endanger these goals. Since the end of the Cold War, the nature of stabilization efforts has changed fundamentally. During the Cold War, when neo-realist thinking prevailed, stabilization was primarily used as an instrument to expand the zone of influence of the United States and the Soviet Union, along with their respective allies. It was instrumental in containing and preventing the rise of rivals. As long as these goals could be achieved, the quality of the political systems of the states involved was secondary.

Since 1990, however, achieving stability—in the sense of a stable domestic political order—has become much more important. This shift can be attributed to two main aspects. First, the end of the Cold War has demonstrated that today's risks are transnational. Combating terrorism, preserving ecological resources, suppressing illicit trafficking in human beings and money laundering, and preventing other activities that lead to turmoil and instability require international co-operation in order to achieve sustainable outcomes. Second, unlike during the Cold War, where military security was key, today's understanding of security is much broader, taking into account economic, political, ecological, societal, and military considerations. This shift from interstate to intrastate analysis has led to the conclusion that cooperative solutions at the international level cannot be achieved without adequate reforms at the domestic level. In this respect, the theory of democratic peace, stipulating that democracies are less war-prone than other regime types because they have learned to solve conflicts peacefully, has been the catalyst behind the transformation of the former communist states and their integration into Europe's security architecture.

Today, the former communist countries in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) are part of Europe's highly institutionalized security architecture (Figure 1). The institutions presently in place have been instrumental in initiating reform within CEE countries. Three functions of this security framework deserve special attention. First, Europe's security architecture has a socializing effect. Since membership in the European security community is contingent upon adherence to specific norms and procedures (e.g., conformity with democratic principles and the rule of law), the security institutions provide incentives to change the behavior of political decision-makers. Second, Europe's tight-knit institutional network provides applicant coun-

tries with a forum in which to present their opinions and to exchange views on current and future challenges. This exchange increases transparency, creates confidence, leads to predictability, and thus furthers stability. Third, institutions such as the European Union (EU), the Council of Europe, the Organizations for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) provide assistance, *inter alia*, through financial support and expert know-how to assist candidate states. Their tailor-made programs help candidates prepare for admission and provide the international organizations with direct access to these countries, thereby enabling them to intervene should any deviations arise that run counter to the admission criteria.

Within this transformation process aimed at expanding the zone of stability from Western Europe to the former communist regions, the OSCE plays a central—albeit underestimated—role. As we will show in more detail below, this Vienna-based organization and its forerunner, the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), have been instrumental in laying the normative foundation for Europe’s security architecture. Most recently, it has also launched important field activities aimed at building up democratic institutions and strengthening civil society in these countries. In order to better understand the OSCE, the next section briefly outlines its political features, its main structure, and the activities of its key institutions. Section Three presents an overview of the OSCE’s broad spectrum of field activities. Finally, we conclude our discussion with an analysis of the main challenges the OSCE will need to address in the future.

Further reading: Borchert, “Strengthening Europe’s Security Architecture”; Buzan, Waeber, and de Wilde, *Security*; Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, *Final Report*; Russett, *Grasping the Democratic Peace*; Schimmelfennig, “International Socialization,”; Simmons and Martin, “International Organizations and Institutions.”

Organization														
Country	Council of Europe	European Union	EAPC	NATO	OSCE	PfP	Baltic Council	BSEC	CBSS	CEI	CEFTA	SEE Stability Pact	SECI	SEECF
Albania	■		■		■	■		■		■		■	■	■
Belarus			■		■	■				■				
Bosnia and Herzegovina					■					■		■	■	■
Bulgaria	■	C	■	C	■	■		■		■	■	■	■	■
Croatia	■		■		■	■				■		■	■	O
Czech Republic	■	C	■	■	■					■	■	■		
Estonia	■	C	■		■	■	■		■					
FYR of Macedonia	■		■		■	■				■		■	■	■
Hungary	■	C	■	■	■					■	■	■	■	
Latvia	■	C	■	C	■	■	■		■					
Lithuania	■	C	■	C	■	■	■		■					
Moldavia	■		■		■	■		■		■		■		■
Poland	■	C	■	■	■				■	■	■	■		
Romania	■	C	■	C	■	■		■		■	■	■	■	■
Slovakia	■	C	■	C	■	■				■	■	■		
Slovenia	■	C	■	C	■	■				■	■	■	■	
Serbia and Montenegro					■					■		■		■
Ukraine	■		■	(1)	■	■		■		■		■		

Abbreviations: BSEC: Black Sea Economic Co-operation; C: Admission candidate; CBSS: Council of Baltic Sea States; CEI: Central European Initiative; CEFTA: Central European Free Trade Association; EAPC: Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council; O: Observer; PfP: Partnership for Peace; SECI: Southeast European Co-operation Initiative; SEE: Southeast Europe; SEECF: Southeast European Co-operation Process; (1) NATO-Ukraine-Charter

Table 1: Participation of CEE Countries in Europe's Security Architecture

Source: Institute for Peace Research and Security Studies/IFSH, *OSCE Yearbook 2001* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2002), 567–582.

The OSCE: Overview

The principle of co-operative security, a comprehensive understanding of security, and a strong emphasis on dialogue are key characteristics of the OSCE. In this section, we look at the OSCE's basic political features and provide a brief description of its structure.

BASIC POLITICAL FEATURES

Since the Helsinki Charter was adopted in 1975, the participating states have found a common normative ground in the CSCE, which was renamed OSCE in 1994. Co-operative security is

the underlying principle of the OSCE. It starts from the assumption that security is indivisible, and that the co-operation of all parties is required to guarantee security, peace, and stability. This understanding has led the OSCE participating states to adopt a comprehensive approach to security, which is illustrated by the OSCE's:

- Geographical scope (reaching from Vancouver to Vladivostok);
- Broad understanding of security, which strikes an equal balance between human, economic, and military aspects of security;
- Involvement in all phases of the conflict cycle (i.e., early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management, post-conflict peace-building);
- Operation as a regional organization under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter.

Since its inception, the OSCE has achieved a high level of legitimacy in its core business of norm-setting. By adopting the Paris Charter in 1990, the OSCE participating states have paved the way for the recognition of democracy as the only legitimate principle of governance within the OSCE area. With this, these states have directly linked the quality of interstate order to their ability to organize internal sovereignty along liberal democratic lines. Although this consensus has opened the door for constructive intervention within the system of each state (by political means) and outside the territory of any given state, the OSCE cannot enforce actions against the will of a participating state.

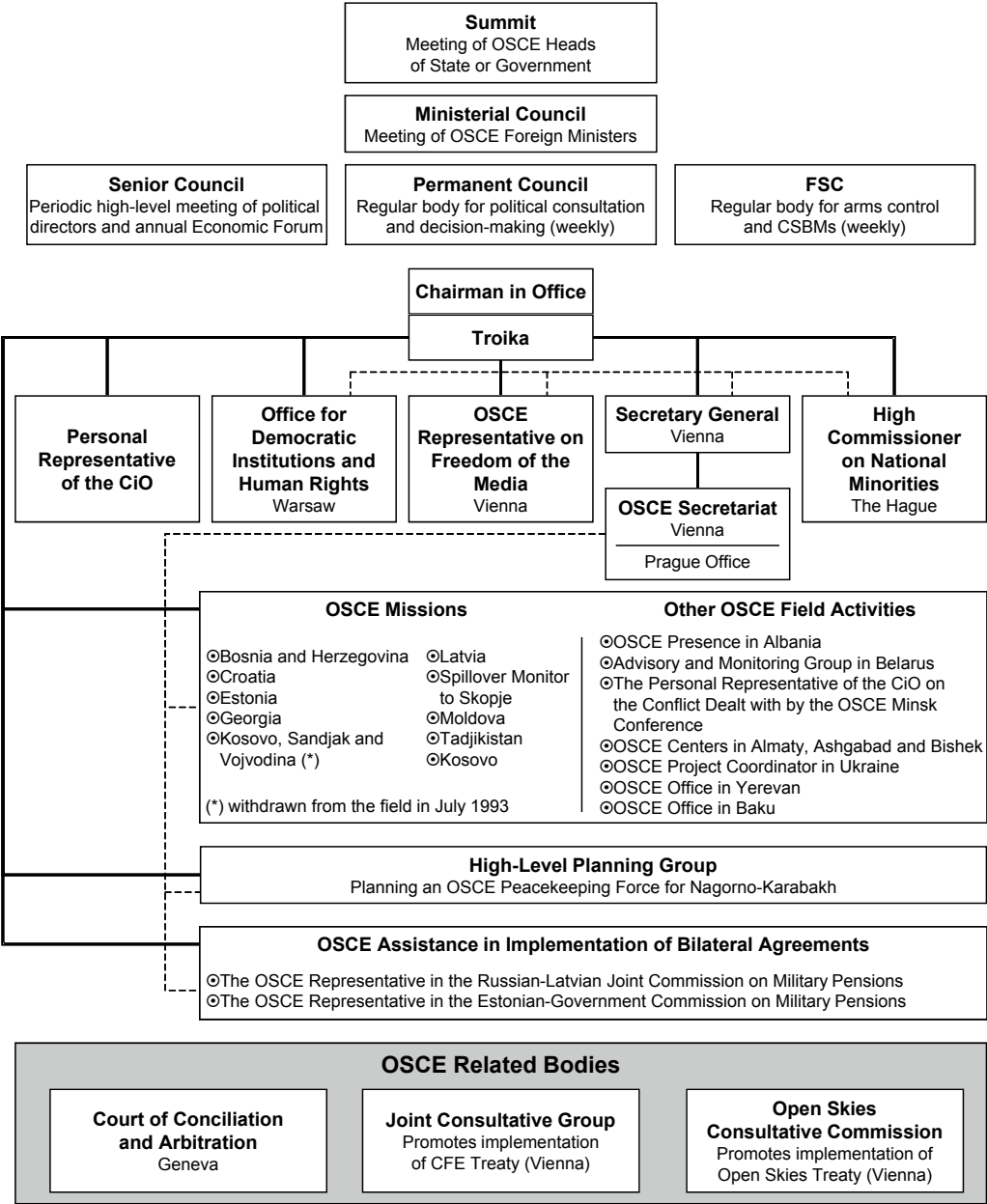
Further reading: Adler, "Seeds of Peaceful Change"; Cohen and Mihalka, *Cooperative Security*; *OSCE Handbook*; Flynn and Farrell, "Piecing Together the Democratic Peace."

MAIN STRUCTURE

The institutional structure of the OSCE has matured gradually since the adoption of the 1990 Paris Charter (Table 2). Today, the OSCE operates with a complex but rather light structure (Figure 1).

The main decision-making bodies and administrative structures are based in Vienna; two institutions are based in Warsaw and The Hague, respectively. The heads of the participating states meet every two (or more) years for summit meetings, which set out the strategic guidelines of the OSCE. Between summit meetings, the OSCE Foreign Ministers meet in the Min-

Ministerial Council to discuss issues of importance to the OSCE. The regular body for political consultation and decision-making is the Permanent Council, which consists of the permanent representatives of OSCE states. Originally established to prepare the Ministerial Council meetings, the Senior Council has lost importance. Since 1997, the Senior Council has only met at the annual Economic Forum. Finally, the Forum for Security Co-operation is the regular body that deals with arms control and confidence-building and security-building measures.



Abbreviations: CFE: Conventional Forces in Europe; CSBM: Confidence and Security-Building Measures; FSC: Forum for Security Cooperation

— Line of Command
 - - - - Provides Support

Figure 1: OSCE Structure

Source: OSCE Website (http://www.osce.org/general/gen_info_pics/organigram.pdf)

The most important operational institution is the Chairman in Office (CiO), which rotates annually among the participating states. Supported by the previous and the succeeding Chairmen, the CiO is responsible for executive action and the co-ordination of the OSCE's activities.¹ In addition, the CiO can also take recourse to the Secretary General and the Secretariat, which provides administrative support. The role of the Secretary General and the Secretariat is rather limited, as they have no political mandate. Among other bodies, the Secretariat includes the Conflict Prevention Center, which runs the Operation Center, and the OSCE Coordinator on Economic and Environmental Activities. Since 1994, the OSCE's annual budget has increased tenfold, from 21 million Euros to 207.9 million Euros in 2000. About 180 million Euros are needed to cover the OSCE's missions and field activities. In addition to the key institutions discussed below in more detail, the OSCE has also established a Parliamentary Assembly and the Court of Conciliation and Arbitration in Geneva, which aims at the peaceful settlement of disputes. So far, no cases have been brought before this court.

Year	Location	Decision
1990	Paris	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bi-annual summit meetings introduced ▪ CSCE Council, Council of Senior Officials, Secretariat, Office for Free Elections, and Parliamentary Assembly established
1992	Prague	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Office for Free Elections transformed into the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR)
	Helsinki	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chairman in Office (CiO), Troika, Personal Representatives of the CiO, the High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM), and Forum for Security Co-operation established
	Stockholm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Options to launch peacekeeping and monitoring missions accepted ▪ Establishment of the Secretary General
1994	Budapest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Permanent Council established ▪ CSCE Council renamed as Ministerial Council ▪ Council of Senior Officials renamed as Senior Council ▪ CSCE renamed as OSCE without legal changes
1996	Lisbon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Representative on Freedom of the Media and OSCE Co-ordinator on Economic and Environmental Activities established

Table 2: Institutional Development of the OSCE since 1990

In general, all OSCE bodies decide by consensus, which means that no party raises objections. Deviations from the consensus principle are foreseen in cases of “clear, gross, and uncorrected” violations of OSCE commitments. In this case, the so-called Prague mechanism of “consensus minus one” can be activated against a participating state. Similarly, the Ministerial

¹ Since 1991, the following countries have acted as CiO: Germany, Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, Sweden, Italy, Hungary, Switzerland, Denmark, Poland, Norway, Austria, Romania and Portugal. The Netherlands (2003), Bulgaria (2004), and Slovenia (2005) will serve as the next CiOs.

Council can decide by “consensus minus two” in cases where two states cannot agree on resolving a dispute.

OFFICE FOR DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS (ODIHR)

In 1992, the Office for Free Elections (established 1990) was renamed the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. The ODIHR, whose normative basis can be traced back to the basic principles of the 1975 Helsinki Final Act, was given expanded functions along with its new name. Among other things, it organizes annual Human Dimension Implementation Meetings, serves as a framework for “assisting the new democracies in their institution-building,” facilitates co-operation in training, and develops co-operation with the Council of Europe and non-governmental organizations.

Today, the ODIHR is the leading pan-European agency for election observation. It comprises more than 80 staff members, and its 2002 budget was 8.45 million Euros. In 2000, more than 3,000 ODIHR observers monitored 15 elections. The Swiss Ambassador Gerard Stoudmann was ODIHR Director until 2002. The Porto Ministerial in December 2002, however, could not agree on a successor. The ODIHR has four main sections. The Election Section promotes democratic elections by monitoring them and by giving election training and assistance in drafting legislation. In observing elections, the ODIHR cooperates closely with the parliamentary assemblies of both the OSCE and the Council of Europe. The Democratization Section runs programs to strengthen democratic institutions and the rule of law, promote human rights, civil society, and gender equality, and to fight trafficking in human beings. A small Monitoring Section follows human rights developments as well as the participating states’ compliance with OSCE human dimension commitments, thus fulfilling an early-warning function. Finally, the Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues, established in 1994, serves as a clearing-house for the exchange of information and for assistance for Roma- and Sinti-related policies.

Further reading: ODIHR, *Reference Guide*; Oberschmidt, “Ten Years of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights.”

HIGH COMMISSIONER ON NATIONAL MINORITIES (HCNM)

The post of the HCNM was established in 1992. The High Commissioner provides early warning and early action in response to tensions involving national minority issues which have not yet developed beyond an early warning stage but could affect peace and stability in the OSCE area. The HCNM is not a minority ombudsman, but belongs to the security dimension of the OSCE. Since the High Commissioner works on the basis of the OSCE's human dimension principles, the office combines the security and the human dimensions in a unique way, thus creating an innovative instrument for early warning and conflict prevention. The former Dutch Foreign Minister Max van der Stoel served as the first HCNM (1993–2001). He was followed by the Swedish diplomat Rolf Ekeus. Today, the High Commissioner's Office in The Hague comprises about 20 staff members, and the 2002 budget was 2.2 million Euros.

The HCNM works independently, impartially, and confidentially. He decides when and where to engage and in what form, but has no power to impose solutions on opposing parties. The High Commissioner is only expected to consult the Chairman-in-Office before taking action and to provide him or her with strictly confidential reports on his findings and conclusions. However, the Commissioner is not allowed to consider national minority issues "in situations involving organized acts of terrorism," nor will he consider violations of OSCE commitments with regard to individual persons. The Commissioner discusses national minority issues with presidents, prime ministers, other members of the cabinet, and the top representatives of minority organizations, and includes local officials and representatives of NGOs whenever necessary.

Following these discussions, the HCNM frequently issues recommendations in the form of a letter to the concerned foreign minister. Together with reports by the HCNM, these letters and the answers received are passed to all 55 participating states and form the basis for discussion in the Permanent Council. With some delay, most of the recommendations are published on the HCNM's website. Beyond that, van der Stoel has asked panels of experts to draft sets of more general recommendations for three fields of majority-minority relations that he felt especially needed further clarification: education, linguistic rights, and participation in public life.² Although the office of the High Commissioner has not been vested with any norm-setting role, these sets of recommendations have been of considerable political relevance. At the same time, they represent the single most important issue areas of contentious majority-

² <http://www.osce.org/hcnm/documents/recommendations/>.

minority relations. Finally, practical projects support the implementation of the commissioner's policy recommendations.

Up until now, the High Commissioner has been active in more than a dozen transitional countries, including Albania, Croatia, Estonia, Georgia, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Macedonia, Moldova, Lithuania, Romania, the Russian Federation, the Slovak Republic, and Ukraine. The only Western country where he has been active is Greece; Turkey bluntly refused his request for a discussion, thus violating the commitments it took on with the adoption of the HCNM's mandate. The most frequently asked questions the HCNM has dealt with include those concerning citizenship and naturalization issues (in Estonia and Latvia), minority language use (*inter alia*, in Macedonia, Romania, and Slovakia), minority language education, especially in the tertiary sector (e.g., in Macedonia and Romania), and minority participation in public life, from increased representation to arrangements of autonomy (e.g., Crimea/Ukraine).³

Further reading: Kemp, *Quiet Diplomacy*; Zellner, "The OSCE's High Commissioner."

REPRESENTATIVE ON FREEDOM OF THE MEDIA (FOM)

The Representative on Freedom of the Media was established at the 1996 OSCE Lisbon Summit; Freimut Duve was appointed as first incumbent in 1997. His first term of three years was later extended until the end of 2003. The FOM's mandate is threefold. First, assuming an early-warning function, the FOM observes relevant media developments in participating states and advocates and promotes full compliance with OSCE principles regarding freedom of the media. In doing so, he co-operates closely with the Permanent Council, ODIHR, and the HCNM. Second, and in close co-operation with the CiO, he concentrates on rapid responses in cases of serious non-compliance, seeks direct contact with parties involved, assesses the facts and contributes to conflict resolution. Finally, he collects and receives information and reports regularly to the Permanent Council and to the Human Dimension Implementation as well as to OSCE Review Meetings. His activities are subject to the same restrictions that apply to the HCNM.

³ For more information on the effectiveness of the HCNM, see: <http://www.core-hamburg.de/english/research/hcnm/>.

In practice, Mr. Duve follows a project-oriented approach. A prime example is the “mobile.culture.container: Library, School, Theatre. Defense of our Future,” a media and cultural project for young people in Southeastern Europe under the framework of the Stability Pact. In addition, the FOM convened a series of media-related meetings, such as a conference on “Media Freedom in Central Asia” in Almaty in December 2001 and a round table on “Corruption and Journalists” in Prague in December 2000. Unlike the HCNM, the Representative on Freedom of Media works with a less confidential approach and frequently issues press statements. He also addresses cases in Western Europe. In June 2002, he asked the Italian Prime Minister Berlusconi for clarification on the removal of political TV programs from the state broadcaster RAI. In October 2002, he criticized a draft version of a restrictive media law in the German state of Hamburg.

Further reading: OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, *Freedom and Responsibility*.

FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION (FSC) AND OTHER SECURITY DIMENSION ACTIVITIES

The FSC is a decision-making body for negotiations on arms control, disarmament, and confidence- and security-building measures (CSBM), as well as regular consultations on security-related matters. It is expected to help reduce the risk of conflicts and will follow the implementation of agreed-upon measures.

Since its establishment in 1992, the scope of the FSC has gradually expanded. It covers such diverse activities as the harmonization of arms control and CSBM obligations, the global exchange of military information (concerning, for instance, force planning and defense conversion), and co-operation with regard to non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. Although the FSC has lost some of its original importance due to the activities of other international organizations (mainly NATO), the 1994 “Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security” was a landmark example in norm-setting. The code sets out rules for the effective and democratic control of armed forces and provides norms and restrictions for internal security missions of armed forces.

Other security-related items negotiated within the OSCE include the regional arms control and CSBM agreements for Bosnia-Herzegovina under the General Framework of the Dayton

Agreement. Finally, the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) and the Open Skies Treaty, which were not formally negotiated within the CSCE/OSCE, fall into the category of security-building through arms control under the OSCE umbrella.

Further reading: Lachowski and Rotfeld, “Success or Failure?”

OSCE Field Activities

By the end of 2002, the OSCE ran nineteen field activities in participating states in Eastern and Southeastern Europe, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. Five have already been closed.⁴ The mandate and the budget of a field mission must meet with consensus among the participating states and the mission’s host country. The following description of past and ongoing OSCE field activities was structured to correspond to the three main stages of the conflict cycle: unstable peace, crisis and conflict, and post-conflict rehabilitation. Because certain countries have passed through different levels of escalation over time, the classification used here concentrates on the most important and typical phase of a mission’s activity.

UNSTABLE PEACE

The OSCE Missions to Estonia and Latvia (1993–2001, 4–7 international members): These missions mainly dealt with the rights of the members of the large Russian-speaking minorities in these Baltic states, most of whom had become stateless when Estonia and Latvia regained their independence and restricted citizenship to the descendants of citizens of the inter-war republics. Questions of naturalization and access to citizenship, as well as issues of language rights and minority-language education, were handled in close co-operation with the HCNM. Together, the missions and the HCNM made progress toward liberalizing the citizenship policies of these two Baltic states and in moving them away from their originally exclusionist stance to more integrative policies. As a result, the OSCE substantially contributed to preparing Estonia and Latvia for future EU membership. As Russia opposed the closure of the missions in 2001, both mandates were simply not prolonged.

Further reading: Bollow, “The OSCE Missions to Estonia and Latvia.”

The OSCE Advisory and Monitoring Group in Belarus (since 1998, 5 international members): This group assists the Belarusian authorities in promoting democratic institutions, complying with other OSCE commitments, and in monitoring and reporting on this process. The serious deficiencies of Belarus regarding human rights, democracy, and the rule of law were the underlying reasons for establishing this group in Belarus. Following sharp debates, the Lukashenko regime made the group's work within Belarus impossible by refusing visas to its members. However, the group is not closed, and continues its work from Vienna. New negotiations started with Belarus after the 2002 Porto Ministerial.

Further reading: Wiersma, "Belarus."

The OSCE Mission to Ukraine and the OSCE Project Coordinator in Ukraine (1994–1997, 4–6 international members): This mission's mandate assigned it, in co-operation with the HCNM, the task of addressing a wide range of issues regarding the Autonomous Republic of Crimea in Ukraine, including national minorities in this Autonomous Republic. Together, the mission and the High Commissioner substantially facilitated a constitutional solution for the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, but their contribution to improving the situation of the national minorities there, namely the Crimean Tatars, remained limited. In 1999, the mission was replaced by a project coordinator with a much more limited mandate to plan, implement, and monitor projects between relevant authorities of Ukraine and the OSCE. The OSCE mission had been perceived by Ukrainian officials as a stigmatization of the country.

Further reading: Büscher, "The Missions to the Republic of Moldova and to Ukraine."

CRISIS AND CONFLICT

The OSCE Missions of Long Duration in Kosovo, Sandjak, and Vojvodina (1992–1993, 12–40 international members): The mandate assigned the missions to promote dialogue between the FRY authorities and the population of the regions of Kosovo, Sandjak, and Vojvodina, to establish contact points, and to collect information on all aspects of the violation of human

⁴ As this case study focuses on CEE countries, OSCE field activities in Russia, Central Asia, and in the Caucasus were

rights in these areas. The objective was to avoid a further escalation of conflicts in these three regions. After June 1993, the CSCE and FRY officials could not agree to extend the mission's mandate, since the latter's participation had been suspended since July 1992. The mission had to leave the country in July 1993. From that time until late 1998, when the Kosovo Verification Mission was deployed, no international organization was present within any part of the FRY.

The OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje passed through two quite different phases: one before and one after the near civil war in Macedonia in 2001. The mission started its work in late 1992 with 4–8 members. It was assigned to monitor “developments along the border of the Host country with Serbia and in other areas of the Host country which may suffer from spillover of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia” and “to help prevent possible conflict in the region.” As Macedonia's stability was more threatened by domestic inter-ethnic conflicts, the Mission's focus turned to the domestic sphere, where it co-operated closely with the HCNM.

After the Ohrid Framework Agreement of 18 August 2001, which laid the foundation for Macedonia's peaceful development, the mission was substantially enlarged up to an authorized strength of 159 international mission members, including 77 police advisers and trainers. Its mandate now covers monitoring as a contribution to stability and security, reporting on the situation in the northern border areas, including issues concerning the traffic in arms and human beings, and on the humanitarian situation, including the return of refugees and internally displaced persons. Police advisers without executive authority were deployed in sensitive areas; police trainers took over the task of training 1,000 new police officers, mainly of ethnic Albanian origin. Parliamentary elections in 2002 were observed by ODIHR, which certified their correctness. Viewed comprehensively, this mission, which started with an outside-oriented crisis prevention task, is now engaged in a complex domestic post-conflict rehabilitation task implemented in close co-operation with a series of other international actors, especially the EU and NATO.

Further reading: Ackermann, “On the Razor's Edge.”

The OSCE Mission to Moldova (since 1993, 10 international members): Its original mandate gave this mission the task of facilitating a framework for dialogue and negotiation concerning a lasting political settlement in Moldova, including special status for the Trans-Dniester region, as well as encouraging negotiations on the withdrawal of foreign (Russian) troops. In December 1999, this mandate was expanded by “ensuring transparency of the removal and destruction of Russian ammunition and armaments and co-ordination of financial and technical assistance” for these ends. The implementation of a tripartite plan for the disposal of 40,000 tons of Soviet weapons and ammunition submitted by the OSCE in 2001 is progressing slowly. By November 2002, only six trainloads had left the Transdniestrian region of Moldova.

Further reading: Hill, “Making Istanbul a Reality.”

The OSCE Presence in Albania (since 1997, 38 international members): Albania represents one of the rare cases of an OSCE field activity without an ethno-political background. The team started working after the collapse of numerous so-called pyramid schemes, wherein state structures dissolved to such a point that the country was at the brink of anarchy. The mission was mandated to promote democratization, freedom of the media, and human rights, and to assist in election preparation and monitoring, including the collection of weapons. In its initial phase it worked under the overall co-ordination of Frank Vranitzky, Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office. In 1997, the mandate was enhanced to provide “flexible co-ordination of the efforts of the international community” and to serve “as a clearing-house for information on the international efforts in Albania.”

Further reading: Imholz, “The OSCE Presence in Albania.”

The OSCE Kosovo Verification Mission (KVM, 1998–1999, 700–1,400 verifiers): KVM started working shortly after the Holbrooke/Milosevic agreement in October 1998. Its main tasks were to report cease-fire violations, conduct border monitoring, and facilitate the return of refugees along with ICRC and UNHCR. Following the breakdown of the Rambouillet process, the KVM was withdrawn from Kosovo on 20 March 1999 for reasons of security;

four days later, NATO started its air campaign against the FRY. In Macedonia, 350 KVM mission members assisted the UNHCR in its response to the Kosovo Albanian refugee crisis. Assessments of KVM's role diverge: while some analysts stress that an unarmed mission, such as the KVM, lacked the means to contain the conflict in Kosovo at this stage, others suggest that it could have contributed to a peaceful solution had it been deployed for a longer period of time. From the perspective of the Russian Federation, the KVM directly assisted in preparing NATO's subsequent air campaign. Amongst others, this is one important reason for the Russian Federation's alienation from the OSCE during the past four years.

Further reading: Bellamy and Griffin, "OSCE Peacekeeping"; Matveev, "The OSCE Identity Crisis."

POST-CONFLICT REHABILITATION

The OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) (since 1995, 130 international members): The Dayton Peace Agreement foresaw three tasks for the OSCE mission. First, the mission was to assist in the preparation and conduct of municipal elections and the establishment of a permanent election commission. Between 1996 and 2000, the mission prepared, conducted, and supervised all BiH post-war elections until the adoption of the Election Law. Since then, national authorities have been in charge of the election process. The second main focus of the mission is the monitoring of the human rights situation, covering many issues related to the right to return of refugees and internally displaced persons including property restitution, judicial and legal reform, trial monitoring, and criminal justice. Following Annex 1-B of the Dayton Agreement, the OSCE facilitated the adoption, in January 1996, of an "Agreement on CSBMs in Bosnia and Herzegovina," followed in June 1996 by an "Agreement on Sub-Regional Arms Control," which established ceilings for battle tanks, armored combat vehicles, artillery pieces, combat aircraft, and attack helicopters in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. In 2001, an agreement on voluntary CSBMs "in and around the former Yugoslavia" was concluded.

Further reading: Du Pont, "Democratization Through Supporting Civil Society."

The OSCE Mission to Croatia (since 1996, 90 international members): This mission supports Croatian authorities in protecting of human rights, especially those of minority groups, including assistance and advice on the full implementation of legislation, and monitors the functioning and development of democratic institutions and processes. In April 1996, this mandate was expanded to assist in the two-way return of refugees and displaced persons and the protection of their rights. The OSCE monitors, in particular, the implementation of minority returns with a special focus on Serbian Croats who face great difficulties, especially concerning property return and restitution. According to the OSCE mission's assessment, the "Government's commitment to refugee return has strengthened but remains ambiguous." Starting in 1998, the OSCE Mission also deployed civilian police monitors to assume the responsibilities of the United Nations Police Support Group deployed in the Croatian Danube region. After the successful conclusion of this task, the number of police mission members was reduced from over 125 to the current number of seven, who now concentrate on advising the Croatian police authorities in drafting and implementing police reforms, especially in community policing.

Further reading: Fend, "Croatia—A New Era?"

The OSCE Mission in Kosovo (OMIK, since 1999, 350 international, 1,150 local members): The OMIK contributes to the implementation of the UN Security Council's Resolution 1244 as part of the overall framework of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). The OMIK, which is the largest OSCE field activity, takes the lead role in building human resources capacity and institutions and in promoting human rights. It fulfills classical state functions in the international protectorate of Kosovo:

- *The Department of Democratization* develops Kosovo's civil administration and political parties, and assists in strengthening civil society, including local NGOs. Its Civil Administration Support Division aims at building up local government structures and runs the Institute for Civil Administration, where local government staff is trained. Its media unit supports independent media, drafts media regulations and laws, and monitors the media.
- *The Department for Human Rights and Rule of Law* monitors and protects the observance of human rights and the rule of law. Its Human Rights Division focuses on trafficking in human beings, residential property rights, non-discrimination, and victim advocacy. The

Rule of Law Division has established several institutions for the training of judiciary staff and was instrumental in setting up the Law Faculty at the University of Pristina.

- *The Department of Elections Operations* organized the municipal elections in 2000 and 2002, as well as the Kosovo-wide elections in 2001. The municipal elections in October 2002, for example, were observed by 764 international polling station supervisors.
- *The Department for Police Education and Development* runs the Kosovo Police Service School (KPSS) which, until September 2002, provided basic police instruction, followed by a field training module run by the UNMIK international police. Starting in 2002, the KPSS increasingly focused on specialized training for KPS officers.

Further reading: Everts, “The OSCE Mission in Kosovo.”

The OSCE Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (since 2001, 28 international members, 26 international police trainers plus 75 local staff): This mission has been given a mandate to provide assistance and expertise to the Yugoslav authorities in the fields of democratization and the protection of human and minority rights. In particular, the mission assists in the restructuring and training of law enforcement agencies and the judiciary. The mission has established a multi-ethnic police training facility in Mitrovo Polje, which by May 2002 had trained 400 police officers for Southern Serbia. During a Police Reform Co-ordination Conference convened by the OSCE in December 2001, the Serbian Minister of the Interior marked six priority areas of police reform: police education and development, accountability and internal control, organized crime, forensics, border policing, and community policing. The mission’s Law Enforcement Department has developed co-operative projects for each of these areas. The mission’s Rule of Law/Human Rights Department co-ordinates the establishment of a juridical training center for judges and prosecutors in Belgrade.

ASSESSMENT

Although a comprehensive mission assessment is beyond the scope of this paper, it seems fair to say that:

- OSCE field activities at the escalation levels of *unstable peace and post-conflict rehabilitation* have better chances to accomplish their tasks than those working in acute crisis

situations, where the relevance of hard military security instruments is increasing. In unstable peace situations, OSCE missions have substantially contributed to strengthening stability and security, as was seen in Estonia and Latvia.

- During *crisis situations*, the OSCE presence in Albania and, to a lesser degree, its field activities in Central Asia and Chechnya, which have not been addressed in this paper, can claim at least some success.
- In cases of so-called *frozen conflicts* (e.g., Moldova/Trans-Dniestria), missions have not yet been able to broker a solution to the conflict. However, they contributed to maintaining cease-fires and facilitated a gradual decline in the intensity of these conflicts.
- In *post-conflict rehabilitation* situations, OSCE missions have either substantially contributed to reform processes in key areas (police and security sector reform in Croatia and the FRY), or they have taken over original state functions (BiH, Kosovo) in a larger international co-operative framework.
- Beyond that, key political factors for the (relative) success of a mission are support from powerful participating states and the presence of both a strong Chairperson-in-Office and Head of Mission.

Today's field activities, which cover the Balkans, the Caucasus, and Central Asia, are the OSCE's main comparative advantage. While the former CSCE/OSCE aimed at strengthening stability and security by improving *interstate relations*, the new OSCE is almost entirely directed to the regulation of conflicting *intrastate relations*, which can endanger international peace and security. In the specific field of intrastate crisis regulation, the OSCE—with its comprehensive agenda, its civilian means, and its field activities—can be seen as the most advanced and, at the same time, the most cost-effective international organization.

The Road Ahead

As we have argued above, the OSCE plays an important role in strengthening and developing the normative foundation of Europe's security architecture and in assisting countries in transition. However, the eastward expansion of NATO and the EU, and the lack of interest of key participating states, have potentially sidelined the OSCE. To prevent the OSCE from slipping into irrelevance, the following issues should be addressed more vigorously.

First, although the OSCE follows a “light handed” institutional approach, the participating states should devote more attention to streamlining and strengthening the organization. Operational management capacities of the Secretariat for supporting the CiO and the field missions should be reinforced. In addition, the media coverage of the OSCE does not suffer from a lack of important figures but rather from an abundance thereof. A useful first step could thus foresee the devolution of more political authority to the Secretary General. This would sharpen the OSCE’s public standing and would increase continuity in dealing with certain issues.

Second, the OSCE’s field missions have been a success. However, central institutions in Vienna, which are more important for small missions than for large ones, are neither staffed nor financed at a level commensurate with what the OSCE is expected to achieve. This deficiency should be addressed quickly. Furthermore, the OSCE needs clearer criteria to decide on the closure of missions in order to avoid the exhaustion of scarce resources. This requires more attention to the evaluation and assessment of accomplishments, which could be done either through the Secretariat or with the help of external experts. Finally, there is a need to develop new types of field activities that are no longer perceived as stigmatizing by host states, but are welcomed as tailor-made service provision of a multitude of tasks in the fields of human rights, democratization, and the rule of law.

Third, despite the adoption of the “Platform for European Security” (1999), improving institutional relations has so far been put on the back burner. Key among the various relationships is the EU-OSCE link. With its decision to admit ten new members by 2004, the EU is the key beneficiary of the OSCE’s stabilizing achievements. So far, however, it is unclear whether and how the EU members want to use the OSCE. The path to improved relations seems clear, as both organizations are a perfect match. The OSCE’s grassroots approach towards establishing democratic structures is a prerequisite for the EU’s long-term goal of building up an “area of freedom, security and justice” based on supranational law. Therefore, both organizations should join their efforts and pool their resources by combining the separate databases of civilian experts available for rapid assistance, by launching more joint missions for preventive diplomacy and post-conflict peace-building, and by merging their programs to strengthen the rule of law and field police missions.

Fourth, the OSCE's role in addressing the causes of terrorism can be strengthened considerably. Besides using it as a framework for co-ordinating various activities, its comprehensive coverage of the northern hemisphere makes the OSCE a unique platform to deal with the contentions that arise between the desires to fight terrorism, on the one hand, and guarantee civil liberties on the other. In addition, the field missions active in those regions that are ripe for turmoil provide the international community with excellent information and intelligence-gathering antennae. This is especially true for Central Asia, where the OSCE enjoys a singular position. These antennae should thus be used to systematically assess local needs in order to set up tailored programs. Implementing these programs with the help of OSCE field missions ensures that the international community receives first-hand information about their impact and eventual further need for streamlining and/or redesign.

Further reading: Barry, *The OSCE*; ICG, *The OSCE in Central Asia*; Hopman, "Evaluation"; Lenzi, "Climbing Down from Peace Enforcement"; Oberschmidt and Zellner, *OSCE at the Crossroads*.

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INTERNET

Official information about the OSCE can be found at www.osce.org. Among the various documents posted on this site, special attention should be given to the 1990 Paris Charter outlining the organization's post-Cold War *raison d'être*. It can be found at <http://www.osce.org/docs/english/1990-1999/summits/paris90e.htm>.

The Secretary-General's annual reports are ready for download at <http://www.osce.org/docs/english/annualrepe.htm>. Detailed information about the activities of the OSCE institutions can be found at http://www.osce.org/structures_institutions/, and news about the field activities is available at http://www.osce.org/field_activities/.

Co-operation between Europe's security organizations, based on the idea of "interlocking institutions," has been described more fully in the Platform for European Security adopted with the 1999 Charter for European Security. The document is available at <http://www.osce.org/docs/english/1990-1999/summits/istachart99e.htm>.

Academic research on the OSCE has so far been very difficult to find. The OSCE Networking Project at <http://www.isnh.ethz.ch/osce> facilitates access to secondary literature, researchers, research projects, archives, depository libraries, and related links.

Besides the OSCE and other international organizations, non-profit organizations support the transition to democracy as well. Freedom House provides regular assessments of the state of democracy and freedom around the world at <http://www.freedomhouse.org>. The Brussels-based International Crisis Group, <http://www.crisisweb.org>, also provides important and constructive analyses of hot spots dealt with by the OSCE.

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