



FACT SHEET MONTENEGRO

Weapons and Ammunitions Logistics in the Western Balkans - Austrian Activities in Cooperation with the OSCE

PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES

The disintegration of Yugoslavia had far-reaching repercussions for weapons and ammunitions logistics in its successor states. Since its independence from Serbia in June 2006, Montenegro (MNE), as a small country with changed military needs, has also been confronted with a significant surplus of weapons and explosives but limited resources for their management. Through a series of activities, such as Montenegro's Demilitarization Programme (MONDEM) in cooperation with the UN and OSCE, a NATO Trust Fund project and several bilateral projects with the USA, Albania and Slovenia, but also through export sales, approx. 86% of this surplus have been eliminated. Approximately 60% of the current total stockpile of some 2,500 tonnes of explosives remain identified as surplus, half of which is earmarked for destruction. Furthermore, with the separation from Serbia capabilities in the areas of education & training and chemical testing were gradually lost. At the political level, it was decided to build up these capabilities on a national level.

FACT BOX

National territory: 13,812km²
Population: approx. 622,303 (2016)
Official Language: Montenegrin
Capital: Podgorica 150,977 (2011)
Form of government: Parliamentary republic
Religion: Orthodox Christians 72,1%, Muslims 19,1%, Catholics 3,4%, others 1,5%
Gross Domestic Product: 4,77 billion USD (2020)
Currency: 1 EURO (EUR) = 100 Cent
Defence expenditures: 102,1 million USD (2020)
Share of GDP: 2,1%
Total strength: 1,950 (active service) 10,100 (para-military)
Troops abroad: Gulf of Aden – Somalia EU NAVFOR ATALANTA 1, Latvia NATO EFP 10, Kosovo NATO KFOR 1, Western Sahara UN MINURSO 1 (2021)

BACKGROUND AND SCOPE OF THE ENGAGEMENT

The UN-OSCE-led MONDEM project focused on improving the infrastructure of weapons and ammunition storage facilities as well as the environmentally friendly demilitarisation and destruction of heavy weapons; this project was completed in 2018. Already in the final phase of MONDEM, Montenegro requested continued support from the international community and made a respective request to the OSCE. Austria and Switzerland, in cooperation with the OSCE, started the preparatory phase in mid-2018.

In February 2019, Austria was involved, inter alia, in the analysis and development of a comprehensive multi-level support programme (infrastructure, training and personnel). At the **end of 2019, Austria** was able to start implementing the **ammunitions logistics support programme** with its *Mobile Advisory and Training Team (MATT)*.



PRINCIPLES FOR THE COMMITMENT OF THE AUSTRIAN MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

- Mandate within the politico-military dimension of the OSCE, project anchored within the OSCE Mission to MNE
- Implementation according to the OSCE Assistance Mechanism
- Project duration of several years, implementation in three-to-four-year phases
- National ownership, adapted to the needs of Montenegro



PREVIOUS ACTIVITIES AND OUTLOOK 2022/23

The focus of the post-MONDEM phase is on the tailored education & training of new personnel as well as on advising in the planning and implementation of necessary structural measures and institutional adaptations. With a view to protecting the civilian population and mitigating the risk of environmental damage, special attention will be paid to the stability testing of propellants and the establishment of testing capacities in a chemical laboratory at the request of Montenegro. The two last-mentioned activities are priority areas for Montenegro.

2018: Project preparation, development of the cooperation programme with a focus on sustainable knowledge transfer and advice on the adaptation of the existing infrastructure.

2019: Project start, basic training course on stockpile management and safe handling of ammunition as well as workshops on chemical stability testing, logistic information systems (LOGIS) and risk analysis to assess planned infrastructure measures. An introduction to the ammunition logistics processes of the Austrian Armed Forces was provided and a regional exchange with experts from Bosnia and Herzegovina has been started.

2020/2021: Continuation of basic training and support in selecting future trainers; establishment and expansion of capabilities in the field of chemical stability testing of propellants, including the allocation of a mobile Chemical Laboratory (ChemLab) Level 1 for training purpose. The focus was on the implementation and improvement of necessary regulations to ensure the comprehensive application of international standards.

In order to strengthen the regional approach, experts from the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina were included in the Austrian trainer team from the very beginning, thus initiating continuous regional exchange in the field.

2022/2023: The COVID-19 pandemic caused slight delays in the collaboration program. Nevertheless, the basic training could be continued. In addition: extension of courses on visual inspection and preservation of ammunition as well as development and implementation of a stationary laboratory. Continuation of experts exchange in the regional framework together with BIH and MKD. Use of training infrastructure in BIH for the development of knowledge in the dismantling and disposal of ammunition and training of female experts in Austria at the Austrian Armed Forces Logistics School/International Capacity Building Section for 3-6 months. In addition, the integration of Montenegrin trainers into the trainer team of the Austrian Ministry of Defence/Austrian Armed Forces for Austrian activities in the OSCE area was started in order to ensure sustainable cooperation.

CHALLENGES AND SENSITIVITIES

- The large number of international actors, in particular the UN, the OSCE and NATO, as well as a number of bilateral projects, with sometimes diverging approaches and as a consequence thereof the overloading of the limited national structures in Montenegro.
- Finding Montenegro's new role as an independent small state with correspondingly limited resources, especially in terms of personnel, as well as the nonetheless existing need to create sustainable structures and mechanisms at the national level.

OBJECTIVES OF AUSTRIA AND IN PARTICULAR OF THE MOD/AUSTRIAN ARMED FORCES

The Western Balkans is Austria's priority region in terms of security policy. The commitment is a concrete contribution to stabilisation in the immediate neighbourhood, to risk reduction both for the civilian population and with regard to the illicit proliferation of weapons and ammunition, and to the prevention of negative impacts on the environment. In addition, a gender mainstreaming approach in connection with weapons and ammunition stockpile safety and security is actively supported as another current cross-cutting topic. Montenegro is a long-standing cooperation partner of the Ministry of Defence/Austrian Armed Forces in various military fields, such as mountain combat training.



Female soldier during basic training

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE AUSTRIAN MINISTRY OF DEFENCE/AUSTRIAN ARMED FORCES

Project steering at the strategic level is carried out by the Military Policy Division, project implementation is realised by the Armed Forces Logistics School/International Capacity Building Section, supported temporarily and as required by other experts from the Austrian Armed Forces Logistics School, the ammunition depots and the Armament and Defence Technology Agency as well as the Armed Forces in implementing the pool of civil-military capabilities for mission-related special tasks in accordance with the Austrian Security Strategy. With its expertise, the Institute for Peace Support and Conflict Management supports the dissemination of information to the public interested in security policy.

METHODICAL APPROACH

- Mobile Advisory and Training Teams (MATT) are temporarily present in the area of operations.
- Implementation of the *train-the-trainer* approach – a sequence of one *moderating*, one *mentoring* and one *monitoring* phase – with the aim of transferring education and training into national ownership with permanent national training structures.
- Special *train-the-trainer* qualification both in Montenegro and in ammunition depots in Austria managed according to international standards.

