

Dashboard Peace Operations 2024

Current Developments

Compared to the previous year, the total number of peacekeeping personnel has remained roughly constant at 135,000. The number of military personnel has fallen (119,800 to 118,000), while the number of police (8,700 to 10,400) and - minimally - civilian personnel (6,500 to 6,550) has risen. However, a significant reduction in all personnel numbers is foreseeable for 2024 with the end of the UN missions in Mali and Sudan as well as the planned downsizing of the UN mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the AU mission in Somalia. In contrast, the EU opened four new - but much smaller - missions last year, in Armenia, Moldova, the Gulf of Guinea and Niger. However, the latter and the older EUCAP Sahel Niger are expected to close over the course of the year.

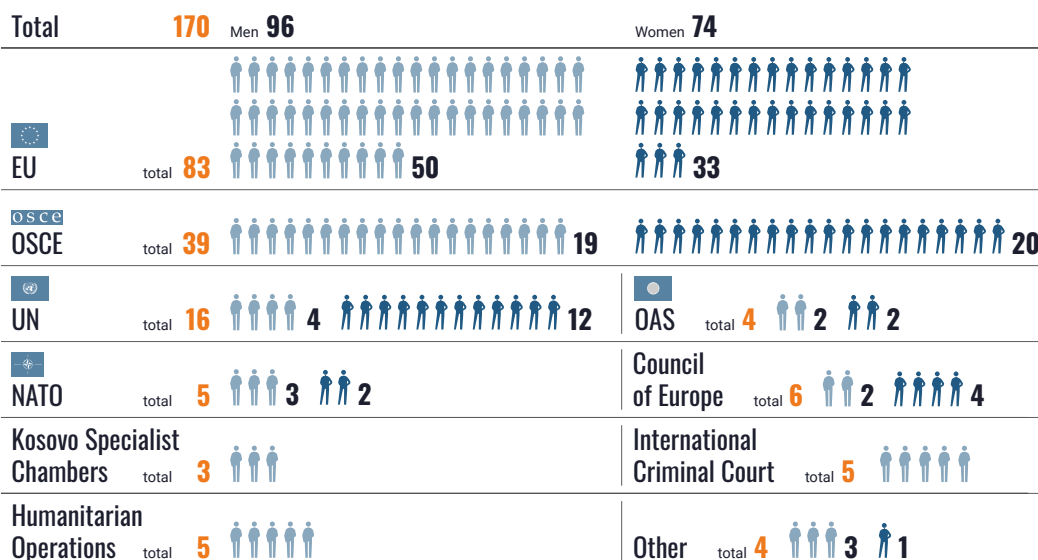
The development of German contributions to peace operations was uneven. The withdrawal of the large Bundeswehr contingent from Mali at the end of 2023 led to a significant decrease in the number of German mili-

tary personnel in peace operations. However, the number of civilian personnel in UN and EU missions increased. Around 170 civilian German experts are currently employed in peacekeeping missions, but also by international organisations in headquarters and in the field as well as in humanitarian missions (as of January 2024). The seconded personnel are spread across a total of 39 countries.

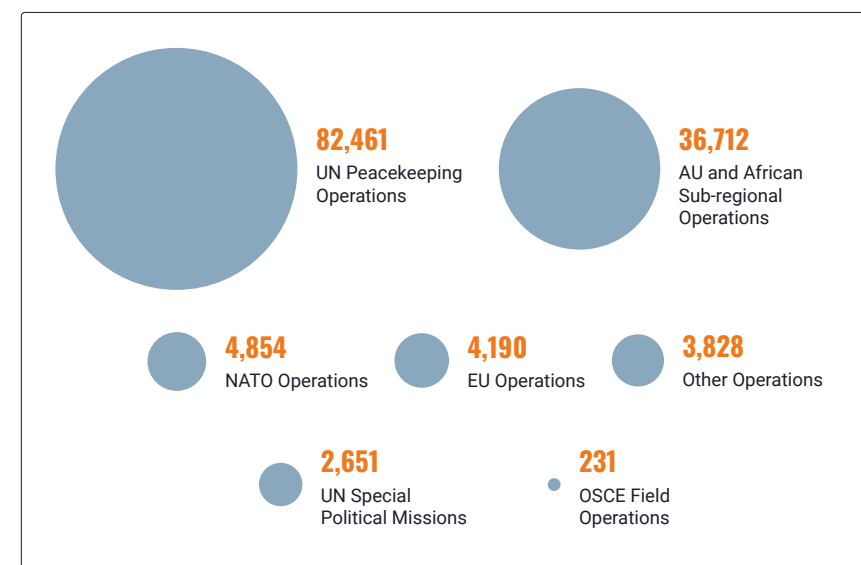
Three other facts remain unchanged: (i) the UN is still by far the largest actor, (ii) the majority of personnel continue to be concentrated in a small number of large missions and (iii) sub-Saharan Africa remains the region with the largest number of missions. Of the six missions with more than 10,000 personnel, five are active in this region (ATMIS/AU/Somalia; MINUSCA/UN/Central African Republic; MNJTF/Lake Chad; MONUSCO/UN/Democratic Republic of the Congo; UNMISS/UN/South Sudan). The sixth is the UN mission in Lebanon (UNIFIL).



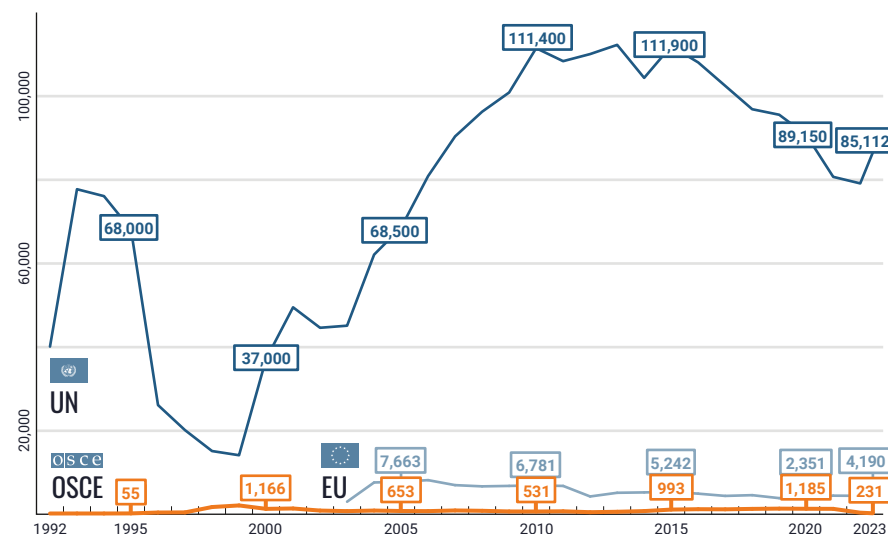
Seconded German Civilian Experts in the Field, HQs and Institutions



Personnel Strength by Organization



Development of Personnel Numbers in Peace Operations



SPOTLIGHT

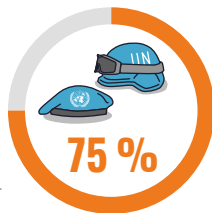
Mis- and Disinformation in the Context of Peace Operations

Current Situation

In recent years, international organisations have become much more aware of the negative consequences of mis- and disinformation in the context of their peace operations. Campaigns by external and internal actors aim to delegitimise missions, deprive them of the trust of the local population, fuel existing conflicts and hinder the implementation of mandates.

Risks of Mis- and Disinformation

In an UN internal survey of 2022, 75% of UN peacekeepers said mis- and disinformation impacted their safety and security.



Source: [UN, Our Common Agenda, Policy Brief 8](#)

The World Economic Forum's [Global Risks Report 2024](#) categorises mis- and disinformation as the greatest short-term risk worldwide for the first time. The use of (generative) artificial intelligence (AI) in the production and distribution of fake content is one of the main reasons for the predicted worsening of the situation. Low-threshold access to AI-based processes for producing content has lowered the barrier to entry into the disinformation market. At the same time, the increasingly high quality of these fakes will make them even more difficult to detect in the future. Despite these developments, leading social media companies have reduced their commitment to content regulation over the past year.

The ability to deploy sophisticated disinformation on a large scale and at low cost strengthens the ability of state and non-state actors to exert influence in countries of operation - even across borders. International organisations are therefore expanding their capacities both in their headquarters and on the ground.

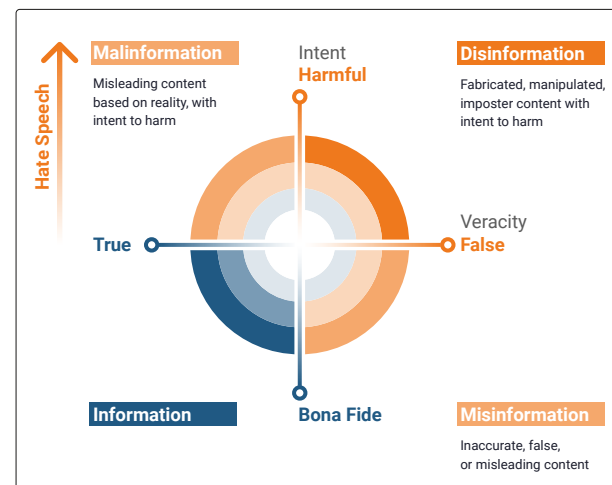
Approaches of International Organizations

The approaches of the UN, EU, NATO and OSCE are similar and essentially focus on (1) monitoring and analysing the information environment; (2) taking countermeasures such as debunking or proactive strategic communication; (3) strengthening the resilience of missions and host countries; and (4) cooperating with national and international partners in addressing the threats.

Since 2022, a workstream set up at the UN Department of Peace Operations (DPO) for a period of two years has been supporting its missions with training, tools and expertise, among other things. An overarching policy is expected to be published in 2024. At the EU, the recently published Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference (FIMI) toolbox has established a framework for action for CSDP missions.

At the threshold of a potentially "new era for mis- and disinformation" (EDMO 2023), the current efforts of peace operations must not distract from the fact that a targeted response to the problem requires a multi-stakeholder approach in various areas. This also includes a global approach to the regulation of platforms and (generative) AI. Hopefully, the [Global Digital Compact](#), which is to be adopted as part of the UN Summit for the Future in September 2024, will define guiding principles for shaping the digital future on a global scale.

Situating Mis- and Disinformation in Information Environment



Source: UN DPO/DPET/Policy and Best Practices Service

Hybrid Threats - New Mandated Tasks

The EU Partnership Mission in the Republic of Moldova (EUPM Moldova), deployed in April 2023, is the first CSDP mission with a mandate in the area of hybrid threats and cyber security (2023/855/CFSP). This was the EU's response to Russia's increasing attempts to destabilise Moldova through hybrid actions in the course of its war against Ukraine. Cyber-attacks on critical infrastructure, disinformation campaigns or illegal party funding - as seen most recently in the local elections on 5 November 2023 - are exerting massive pressure on the pro-European government.



EUPM Moldova aims to strengthen the resilience of the Moldovan security sector in the areas of crisis management and hybrid threats through advice, training and equipment and was able to make important contributions within a short space of time in 2023: among other things, it supported the development of a new National Security Strategy (NSS) and the establishment of a Centre for Strategic Communications and Combatting Disinformation (Strat-Com Centre).

In the run-up to the planned constitutional referendum on EU accession and the potentially decisive presidential elections in November 2024, hybrid warfare is expected to increase in intensity. The relatively small EU mission is faced with the task of reacting quickly and flexibly to this challenge.

Missions with a MDH mandate

Combating mis- and disinformation (as well as hate speech) is becoming increasingly important for peace missions. Some elements are also integrated into mandates of UN missions:

Lebanon: UNIFIL (RES 2695, 2023): "to monitor and to counter disinformation and misinformation that might hinder the mission's ability to implement its mandate or threaten the safety and security of peacekeepers and to develop an annual strategy to counter disinformation and misinformation."

South Sudan: UNMISS (RES 2677, 2023), within the framework of the Human Rights mandate: "to monitor, investigate and report on incidents of hate speech."

Democratic Republic of the Congo: MONUSCO (RES 2717, 2023), within the framework of the POC-Protection of Civilians mandate: "to counter hate speech, misinformation and disinformation."