

Editors' word

Ever since the Yugoslav wars in the 1990s, the Western Balkans has been on the receiving end of international peace operations. However, as the peace in the region consolidates, the region is gradually turning from security-consumer to security-provider. Year after year, the contribution of the Western Balkan states to international peace operation conducted within the UN, NATO or the EU is increasing. Drawing the lessons from their previous operations where military instruments alone proved inefficient to construct durable peace, these organizations have over the past few years increasingly emphasized the role of the civilian capacities. As John Karlsrud and Marko Savković have recently pointed out in this Journal “the practice of civilian contributions to peace support operations is underdeveloped in the entire area of Western Balkans”.¹ Moreover, systematic and independent research of this subject is entirely lacking. This Special Issue of the Journal aims to fill this gap by presenting the first set of empirical studies of the civilian capabilities for peace operations available in the Western Balkan states. The issue opens with a foreword by Tom Woodhouse and an introductory essay co-written by guest editors of this issue Marko Milošević and John Karlsrud, followed by five baseline studies on Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia. We hope that you will find these studies a useful contribution to our understanding of an important facet of the transformation of the Western Balkans from conflict zone to security community fully integrated into international society.

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References:

Savkovic, Marko and John Karlsrud. 2012. “Harnessing Civilian Capacity for Peace Support Operations: A Nascent Community?” *Journal of Regional Security* 7(2): 163-186.

1 Savkovic and Karlsrud 2012, 63.