



Content Committee: Germany

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1 Kosovo / Serbia Conflict Overview

2 Germany's Stance on the Kosovo Conflict

Germany was among the first countries to establish diplomatic relations with Kosovo following its proclamation of independence in 2008, doing so three days after the declaration. Germany then proceeded to establish an embassy in Pristina 10 days after the declaration. [?] Having participated in the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia, Germany went on to accommodate hundreds of Kosovar refugees during the armed conflict and has continued to be involved in Kosovo's reconstruction efforts. Indeed, Germany is home to the largest Kosovar diaspora outside of Kosovo, whose size is estimated at between 200,000 and 300,000 people.[3]

As of today, Germany has contributed 600 million euros for emergency relief measures (making it Kosovo's third largest donor after the EU and US), while also being actively involved in emergency relief and development cooperation in the immediate aftermath of the conflict. Germany has contributed troops to NATO's peacekeeping mission in Kosovo and personnel to the United Nations Interim Administration in Kosovo throughout their operation. According to Germany's Federal Foreign Office, "Germany is considered one of Kosovo's closest partners, actively supporting the country in its efforts towards integration into Euro-Atlantic structures." [2] Most recently, the German chancellor, Angela Merkel, along with the French President, Emmanuel Macron, organized a virtual summit, in the hopes of advancing the process of conflict resolution.[5]

International remittances account for 14 percent of Kosovo's GDP, with an additional 10 percent derived from donor-funded activities. Roughly a third of those international remittances arrive from the members of the Kosovar diaspora in Germany. Given the high level of poverty and the 30.7 percent unemployment rate in Kosovo, such remittances – and the stability afforded to expatriated Kosovars, which renders them possible – are of crucial importance for maintaining and generating stability in Kosovar communities.[3]

However, such great degree of reliance on remittances has also been linked to harmful consequences for Kosovo's economic development: a large portion of the funds received as remittances goes towards imports and thus "props up" the economy temporarily, without contributing to its overall strengthening and development.[4]

Furthermore, Germany is Kosovo's second largest trade partner after nearby Macedonia. The imports from Germany to Kosovo have continuously increased, while exports have also exhibited a slightly less pronounced positive trend.[3]

Interestingly, despite Germany's support of Kosovo, Germany's relations with Serbia were characterized by the Serbian president as "best in history" by Serbian President Aleksandr Vucic and the German ambassador to Serbia, Axel Dittman.[6]

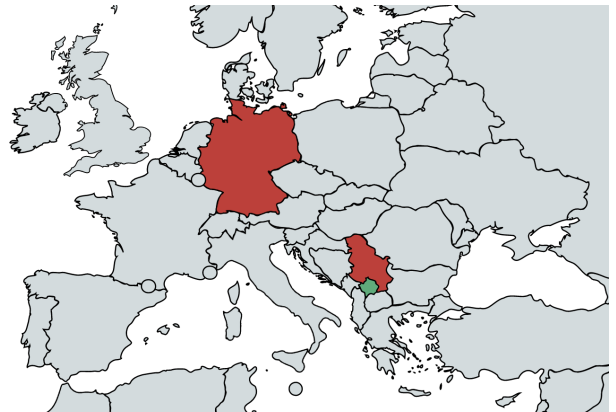


Fig. 1: The relative positions of Serbia and Germany (in red). Kosovo is shown in green.

3 References

- 1 Wikipedia: 'The Germany-Kosovo Relations' https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Germany%20%93Kosovo_relations
- 2 Federal Foreign Office: 'Germany and Kosovo: Bilateral Relations' <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/aussenpolitik/kosovo/228088>
- 3 Prishtina Council on Foreign Relations: 'Germany's Foreign Policy Towards Kosovo' <https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/176465/Policy%20Report%202002%202014.pdf>
- 4 BTI 2020 Country Report - 'Kosovo' https://www.bti-project.org/content/en/downloads/reports/country_report_2020_RKS.pdf
- 5 Euractiv - 'France, Germany Seek to Unfreeze Kosovo - Serbia talks' <https://www.euractiv.com/section/enlargement/news/france-germany-seek-to-unfreeze-stalled-kosovo-serbia-talks/>
- 6 Independent Balkan News Agency - 'Serbian-German Relations 'Best in History'' <https://balkan.eu.com/serbian-german-relations-the-best-in-history/>