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# **Kosovo in Regional Context: Bilateral Political Relations**

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## 1 GENERAL INTRODUCTION

This study examines Kosovo's bilateral political relations with 11 other states of the region since it declared its independence in February 2008. It looks into how Kosovo has managed to fit in the region where although the majority of the states have already recognized it, its statehood and regional legitimacy still remain challenged by one of its neighbouring states and several other states in the region, including some European Union (EU) Member States in the region. This general introduction first elaborates and puts Kosovo against the current regional dynamics and then it summarizes the main findings and ends with the methodology used in this study to assess the quality and the intensity of political relations between Kosovo and every other state of the region. This paper is divided into five main parts. The first part deals with Kosovo's quality and intensity of bilateral relations with its neighbouring states; the second part deals with Kosovo's quality and intensity of relations and contacts with the other non-recognizing states of the region; the third part deals with Kosovo's quality and intensity of bilateral relations with the other EU Member States of the region; the fourth part deals with Kosovo's quality and intensity of bilateral relations with Turkey; and it finally concludes. What comes close to best describing the findings of this entire study is the statement given by Bulgaria's Ambassador to Kosovo, Bobi Bobev, who has stated that "in the Balkans, the relations between the states historically are very good as long as they do not border each other".<sup>1</sup> It is this very statement that summarizes to a large extent Kosovo's quality of relations with all the states in the region.

### 1.1 Kosovo and political dynamics in the region

Kosovo is among the smallest states in the region, both economically and in terms of the size of its geography and population, but which at the same time plays a significant role in regional security and stability. Kosovo has shown to be a factor of stability in two different though progressively similar issues. First, the Declaration of Independence on 17 February 2008 has not destabilized the region and has not called for other actors in the region to demand the redrawing of borders, as some have feared, and actually used as arguments (Serbia in this case) against Kosovo's independence. Second, the ongoing EU facilitated dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia which began on 8 March 2011 and still continues, and is expected to last much longer, is closely followed not only by the other regional actors but also by the entire EU, the United States (US), as well as other global actors. Given that the majority of these actors consider the dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia to be one of the main factors of stability in the region, as it keeps both contesting parties at the table and away from the other means of conducting coercive politics, being a party to this dialogue, Kosovo does hold a considerable stake in regional stability. In spite of this, and leaving Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) aside, the region is still laden by an unsolved and complex case, which is the process of the creation of a new state, not only in the Balkans but also in Europe, which has commenced with Kosovo's Declaration of Independence, but has not finished yet. Five out of 28 EU Member States, and 4 out of 11 states in the region that this paper analyzes, have not recognized Kosovo yet, leaving such dynamics under the fate of the EU-facilitated dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia, not only as a process, but also according to the final outcomes it shall produce.

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<sup>1</sup> Bobi Bobev (Ambassador, Bulgarian Embassy in Kosovo), interview in Prishtina, October 3, 2013.

From Kosovo's perspective, the entire region, which this paper considers when putting Kosovo against each and every state of the region while analyzing Kosovo's bilateral relations and contacts with them, consists of Kosovo's four neighbouring states (Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia), five EU Member States (Croatia, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Greece, and Romania), and two other states which are neither Kosovo's neighbours nor members of the EU, mainly BiH and Turkey. So in addition to its neighbours, BiH and Turkey are the only states in the region that are non-EU Member States, but which have aspirations to join the Union one day. Additionally, the region consists of 7 North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) Member States (Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Romania, Slovenia, and Turkey), which means that with Albania who joined in the Alliance in 2009, NATO, as an international body, has already become Kosovo's neighbour. Of these eleven states of the region, four still have not recognized Kosovo: Serbia (a neighbouring state), Greece and Romania (EU and NATO Member States), and BiH (non-neighbouring, non-EU, and non-NATO Member State of the region).

States	EU Members	NATO Members
Albania	No	Yes
B&H	No	No
Bulgaria	Yes	Yes
Croatia	Yes	Yes
Greece	Yes	Yes
Kosovo	No	No
Macedonia	No	No
Montenegro	No	No
Romania	Yes	Yes
Serbia	No	No
Slovenia	Yes	Yes
Turkey	No	Yes

This regional set-up also leads to complex regional dynamics from Kosovo's, as well as region's perspective. Given that some states of this region (1) are already members of the EU and NATO; (2) some others just members of NATO; (3) some with aspirations to join one of these international bodies; (4) others with aspirations to join both of them; as well as (5) given their distinct geographical positioning, the states of this region also share some foreign and regional policies in some aspects, while embracing distinct policies and approaches in other aspects. For instance, while Kosovo's neighbouring state's foreign policies are to eventually accede and integrate in the EU, not all of them share the same policy when it comes to membership in NATO. Serbia, has already declared military neutrality and does not aim, at least not in short-to mid-term, join the Alliance. Albania, on the other hand, is Kosovo's only neighbour that is a member of NATO, while Kosovo, Montenegro, and Macedonia, all aim to be part of the Alliance in the immediate future. Compared to other states of the region, including its neighbours, Kosovo chases a foreign policy which serve more vital immediate interests for its existence, which is the increase of number of recognitions by an absolute majority of the states in the international community and establishment, and is the only state in the region who's territorial integrity is constantly threatened by one of its neighbours. Other regional states do not face and thus do not pursue such immediate regional and foreign policy.

Similarly, the other states of the region, which are not Members of the EU, such as Turkey and BiH, also share common interests when it comes to joining the EU, although with complete different hurdles on their way to the EU. While BiH faces internal divisions and is characterized with various elements of failed state that prevents it to carry on reforms and meet the conditions set forth by the EU on the one hand, Turkey faces divisions within the EU on whether or not to accept Turkey on grounds that have to do with its demographics and geographic location on the other hand. Just like Kosovo, which focuses on its immediate vital interests that most of the other states of the region do not have to, BiH also focuses on its vital interests, which is the protection and full implementation

of the Dayton Peace Accords, which many view this Accord as BiH's handbrake for reform and further progress towards the EU.

When it comes to the EU Members States of the region, they pursue much more different foreign and regional policies compared to the other states of the region. Given that they already are members of the EU, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Romania, and Slovenia, pursue more common foreign and regional policies. Policies that lead to and keep regional security and stability are the priorities of all the EU Member States of the region. Nonetheless, they do have differences when it comes to their immediate neighbourhood. For instance, given their shared previous 'governing share' under the former Yugoslavia, Slovenia and Croatia keep the rest of the Western Balkans much closer to their foreign and regional policy radars than does Bulgaria and Romania, for instance. Similarly, given Greece's geographic location and its immediate neighbourhood, the Western Balkans is also high on the list of priorities for Greece's foreign and regional policy. Bulgaria's and Romania's foreign and regional policy radars keep the Black Sea region much closer and their aim is to secure peace on that part of the region, which is something that does not concern Croatia, Slovenia, and Greece that much.

Considering that the entire region has already turned to the West and pursues a common agenda to integrate politically and economically to its structures and instruments, besides the EU as an international multilateral body, the United States is also placed as the most important state actor in most of the regional states' foreign policy priority. Albania, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Kosovo, Serbia and Turkey are the regional countries that have expressed explicitly the US to be of their strategic interest and; thus, they have prioritized the cultivation of bilateral relations with it. Kosovo for instance considers "close and special relations with the United States of America [to be] a particular priority for Kosovo's foreign policy".<sup>2</sup> Albania considers the USA to be an "irreplaceable ally of the new Albanian democracy";<sup>3</sup> likewise, Macedonia commits itself to "constant strengthening of its strategies partnership with the US".<sup>4</sup> Also, both Serbia and Montenegro place the USA, besides the EU, Russia and China as their main foreign policy pillars.<sup>5</sup> Croatia considers the relations with the US to be of a "special significance", and that "[s]trengthening partnership relations with the US can have a positive effect on Croatia's overall international position and the realization of its concrete foreign policy goals."<sup>6</sup> Similarly, Turkey aims to further strengthen its bilateral relations with the US in addition to the individual Member States of the EU.<sup>7</sup>

Bulgaria and BiH, on the other hand, consider bilateral relations with the US to be important but in a more implicit way and for different contextual issues. Bulgaria, for instance, views the US-EU relations as important foreign policy, and attempts to develop solid relations with the US and intensify the political dialogue and cooperation in all levels; one of Bulgaria's aims in its relations

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<sup>2</sup> "Foreign Policy Aims" MFA Croatia.

<sup>3</sup> "Foreign Policy", Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Albania, accessed January 27, 2014, <http://www.punetejashme.gov.al/en/mission/priorities>.

<sup>4</sup> "Goals and Priorities", Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Macedonia, accessed December 20, 2013, <http://www.mfa.gov.mk/?q=node/411&language=en-gb>.

<sup>5</sup> Milan Milenkovic, "Is there a change in Serbian foreign Policy", Transconflict, February 1, 2013, accessed November 20, 2013, <http://www.transconflict.com/2013/02/is-there-a-change-in-serbian-foreign-policy-102/>.

<sup>6</sup> "Foreign Policy Aims" MFA Croatia.

<sup>7</sup> "Synopsis of the Turkish Foreign Policy", Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, accessed December 7, 2013, <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/synopsis-of-the-turkish-foreign-policy.en.mfa>.

with US is the abolishment of visa entry to US for Bulgarian citizens.<sup>8</sup> Given that the protection and the implementation of the Dayton Peace Accords is of utmost importance for BiH, then the bilateral relations with "the member countries of the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board [like the] USA, Russian Federation, Great Britain, France, China other member countries of the UN Security Council, [and] member countries of the European Union" are vital<sup>9</sup> Greece, Romania, and Slovenia, attempt to strengthen the relations with the US through the NATO platform.

Finally, what characterizes the dynamics in the region is the ethnic oriented policy that most of the states in the region pursue, and particularly Kosovo's neighbours. Besides their common "good neighbourly relations", a policy that Kosovo's neighbours share, most of them give additional importance and attention to a specific neighbouring state with whom they share either cultural, identity, or historical past or background, and as such tend to keep more special bilateral relations compared to bilateral relations with the other states. For instance, in addition to stating that its foreign policy aim is to develop "good relations with neighbouring states", Kosovo attaches greater importance to its relations with Albania, having one of its foreign policy documents stating that "[c]ooperation with Republic of Albania takes a special place in Kosovo Republic foreign policy"<sup>10</sup>. Likewise, in addition to developing good relations and communications with mutual respect with all the neighbours, Montenegro attaches "special importance [...]to relations with Serbia, which entails the relationship of equal partnership and mutual respect".<sup>11</sup> In its regional policy, Albania also pays more attention to specific issues in relation to specific neighbouring countries. For instance, Albania aims to play an active role in regional peace and security by supporting "the process of the settlement of the final status for Kosovo", and in the case of Macedonia, by "support[ing] Ohrid Agreement, recognizing it as the sole platform for the prosperity of Macedonia and the good, friendly and neighbourly relations between two countries"<sup>12</sup>.

In its bilateral relations with BiH, Serbia also attaches more importance to strengthening its relations with Banja Luka than with Sarajevo, and for Republika Srpska (RS), Belgrade looks more like their capital than does Sarajevo. Similarly, Serbs in Kosovo, now with the upcoming Association of Serb Municipalities in Kosovo, are going to view Belgrade as their capital rather than Prishtina. So overall, the states of the region, especially those that are still left out of Euro-Atlantic structures, still pursue ethnic based foreign policies which threatens, to a certain extent, the very regional security and stability that the other neighbouring countries attempt to achieve.

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<sup>8</sup> "Foreign Affairs", Embassy of the Republic of Bulgaria in London, accessed December 24, 2013, [http://www.bulgarianembassy-london.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=35&Itemid=103](http://www.bulgarianembassy-london.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=35&Itemid=103).

<sup>9</sup> "Basic Directions of BiH Foreign Policy", Ministry of Foreign Affairs of BiH, accessed January 5, 2014, [http://www.mvp.gov.ba/vanjska\\_politika\\_bih/osnovni\\_pravci\\_vanjske\\_politike\\_bih/?id=2](http://www.mvp.gov.ba/vanjska_politika_bih/osnovni_pravci_vanjske_politike_bih/?id=2).

<sup>10</sup> "Kosovo Foreign Objectives", Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kosovo, accessed November 25, 2013, <http://www.mfa-ks.net/repository/docs/Kosovoforeignobjectives.pdf>.

<sup>11</sup> "Foreign Policy", Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of Montenegro, accessed January 11, 2014, <http://www.mvpei.gov.me/en/ministry/Foreign-Policy/>.

<sup>12</sup> "Mission of MFA", Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Albania, accessed October 14, 2013, [http://www.mfa.gov.al/index.php?option=com\\_multicategories&view=article&id=5391:misioni-i-ministrise-se-puneve-te-jashtme&Itemid=64&lang=en](http://www.mfa.gov.al/index.php?option=com_multicategories&view=article&id=5391:misioni-i-ministrise-se-puneve-te-jashtme&Itemid=64&lang=en).

## 1.2 Bilateral relations and contacts

When Kosovo is put in bilateral context with the other states of the region, the quality and intensity of its relations with each and every country in the region is different. In terms of quality of relations, Albania and Turkey are the only countries in the region with which Kosovo enjoys *excellent* relations, while it maintains *very intensive* relations with Albania and *intensive* relations with Turkey. The excellent quality of relations between Kosovo and these two states derives from the fact that both Albania and Turkey have recognized Kosovo immediately, a day after it has declared its independence, while diplomatic relations were established on the day of recognition, unlike some other states of the region that have delayed these two fundamental aspects in developing bilateral relations. Also, Turkey and Albania have already maintained a diplomatic presence through their Liaison Office, even before Kosovo declared its independence, and they have upgraded their diplomatic status to an Embassy and have appointed their Ambassadors much sooner than the other states of the region.

Additionally, what contributes to the excellent bilateral relations between Kosovo and these two states, is the number of agreements they have signed with Kosovo; Albania ranks first among its neighbours and second in the region with the number of agreements it has signed with Kosovo, 17 in total, while Turkey ranks the first in the region with the number of agreements it has signed with Kosovo, 21 in total<sup>13</sup>. In addition, unlike most of the states of the region, neither Albania nor Turkey have ever applied barriers to movement for Kosovo citizens. What has contributed to excellent relations between Kosovo and Albania, and between Kosovo and Turkey, is the investments that these two states have made in Kosovo, which are some of the largest in the region. Between 2008-2012, Albania has been the third largest investor in Kosovo with a total yearly average investments of more than 16.2 million Euros<sup>14</sup>, while Turkey has been the second largest investor in Kosovo, after Slovenia, with a total yearly average investments of more than 28.6 million of Euros<sup>15</sup>.

As far as the intensity of relations is concerned, in the case of Kosovo's bilateral relations with Albania, it is more the intensity of political activities rather than economic activity that contributes to both states having *very intensive* relations between one another. On the other hand, in the case of Kosovo's bilateral relations with Turkey, it is more the intensity of economic activities rather than political activity that contributes to both states have *intensive* relations between one another. It is worth summarizing that Albania and Turkey are the only countries in the region that have kept and continue to keep their bilateral relations with Kosovo to a large extent, if not completely, unconditional.

Macedonia and Montenegro, on the other hand, are Kosovo's other neighbouring countries with which Kosovo enjoys *very good* and *fair* bilateral relations respectively, but which, at the same time have kept their relations with Kosovo quite conditional when compared to Albania and Turkey. Macedonia and Montenegro are the last two countries in the region that have recognized Kosovo, and, unlike the other states of the region that have recognized Kosovo either immediately or within the first two months, Macedonia and Montenegro submitted their recognition only 8 months after Kosovo declared its independence. Both, Macedonia and Montenegro delayed their recognitions

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<sup>13</sup> Since this is a summary of the study, all the sources are provided further in the analysis.

<sup>14</sup> Shprend Kursani, "Kosovo in Regional Context: Economic and Trade Relations", KIPRED, No. 3/13, July, 2013, 59-61.

<sup>15</sup> "Kosovo in Regional Context: Economic and Trade Relations", 59-61.



because they feared they would ruin their relations with Serbia, especially the mutual economic interdependence. As such, it took some of the Western powers, including key EU and NATO Member States to apply some pressure and entice them with swifter accession process in order to make them move on with recognition. The Albanian community in Macedonia also played a role, and regional security and stability was taken into account throughout this process. Unlike, Turkey and Albania, Macedonia and Montenegro have built conditional bilateral relations with Kosovo. For, instance, Montenegro did not want to upgrade its diplomatic representation unless Kosovo upgrades the status of Kosovo Montenegrins to a constitutional community - equal to the constitutional rights the other communities in Kosovo enjoy. Similarly, Macedonia did not want to establish diplomatic relations, unless Kosovo would agree on border demarcation, and so on.



What mostly contributes to Macedonia having *very good* bilateral relations as compared to Montenegro which has *fair* bilateral relations with Kosovo, is the number of agreements that each of them has signed with Kosovo. Macedonia ranks third among the countries of the region with the number of agreements signed with Kosovo, 16 in total, while Montenegro ranks eighth in the region, or the last among those who have recognized Kosovo, in terms of the number of agreements it has signed with Kosovo, which are only 3 in total. Macedonia and Montenegro have had only modest investments in Kosovo, and do not contribute much on the quality of relations between them and Kosovo. As far as the intensity of relations between Kosovo and these two states is concerned, Kosovo maintains only *moderately intensive* relations with Macedonia, and *no active* relations with Montenegro, which is surprising given that these two states are Kosovo's immediate neighbours. Moderately intensive relations between Kosovo and Macedonia derive mostly from economic activity, rather than political activity among the two states, while with Montenegro, both, political and economic activity lags behind.

The quality of relations between Kosovo and all four non-recognizing states of the region remains *poor*, but intensive to a certain extent with some of them. For instance, besides that Kosovo's relations with Serbia are *poor* on the one hand, the relations are maintained at *moderately intensive* level on the other hand. The relations between Kosovo and non-recognizers are poor due to the fact that Serbia does not recognize Kosovo and engages itself in actively challenging Kosovo's international legitimacy. Kosovo and Serbia have not engaged in any bilateral political activities, but they have maintained very intensive contacts at multilateral level. The prime ministers of both states, for instance, have met more than 16 times until September 2013, and both sides have also engaged in all other levels of government in order to coordinate the activities pertaining to all the conclusions/agreements reached as part of the EU-facilitated dialogue that began on 8 March 2011. What contributes to the higher intensity of relations between Kosovo and Serbia, as a result, is not their bilateral political activity, but it is because of intensive economic relations between them. Serbia is Kosovo's second trading partner.



As for the other states of the region that have not recognized Kosovo, they all maintain their initial position of non recognition, and in spite of *poor* relations between them and Kosovo, the intensity of relations is plausible considering the stance they take on Kosovo. For instance, while the relations with BiH and Romania are *not active*, just like those between Kosovo and Montenegro, Kosovo's relations with Greece are *moderately intensive*. This level of intensity of relations between Kosovo and Greece derives from some slim political activity between the two, and some economic activity that exists to a certain extent. Unlike the other non-recognizers of the region, Greece has been more open to Kosovo, and has not taken an isolationist stance that BiH, and initially Serbia, and to a certain extent Romania have taken. Greece understands that inclusive regional policy, without

changing its stance on Kosovo final status, serves regional security and stability (though in short-term), but at least they have been open to host as well as come to Kosovo and meet the high officials of Kosovo a number of times. BiH and Romania, on the other hand, have been more isolationist towards Kosovo, than even Serbia has. BiH views Kosovo from Serbian lenses and even acts more aggressively towards Kosovo than Serbia does; its Rrepublika Srpska (RP) and the Serb representatives at different governing levels in BiH are the blocking parties when issues regarding Kosovo come up in BiH. Romania, unlike Greece, has been very careful in not meeting any Kosovo high officials officially, as to not sent a potential message for an implicit recognition. Serbia, for instance does not apply restrictions to freedom of movement to Kosovo citizens, while BiH still does.<sup>16</sup> Unlike BiH, however, Greece and Romania maintain their Liaison Offices reported to UNMIK, through which they conduct their diplomatic activity in Kosovo.

As for the other EU Member States of the region (those that have recognized Kosovo) maintain *very good* relations with Kosovo in the case of Slovenia, and *good* relations in the cases of Bulgaria and Croatia, in terms of quality, and *moderately intensive* relations with all of them in terms of intensity. Compared to the other states of the region, they were not among the states that have immediately recognized Kosovo; they did this after the first month of the Declaration of Independence. Diplomatic relations and relations at ambassadorial level have been established some time after the recognition (not immediately as some other states with whom Kosovo maintains excellent relations have done), and they have, overall, maintained continues diplomatic representation at Ambassadorial level ever since they have appointed their first Ambassadors to Kosovo for the first time. Also, in terms of the number of agreements, Kosovo has signed between 5 to 10 agreements with each of these EU Member States of the region that have recognized Kosovo. What prevents these states mostly from having *excellent* relations with Kosovo, though this is not the only aspect in this regard, is the barriers to entry that these EU Member States apply to Kosovo citizens. Considering that Slovenia is a member of the Schengen Zone, and Bulgaria and Croatia have to apply the Schengen rules, they cannot autonomously and individually decide to waive visa requirements for Kosovo citizens. The *moderately intensive* relations between Kosovo and the other EU Member States derive from both political and economic activity between the states, although economic activity plays a slightly more important role in defining the intensity of relations between Kosovo and these EU Member States.

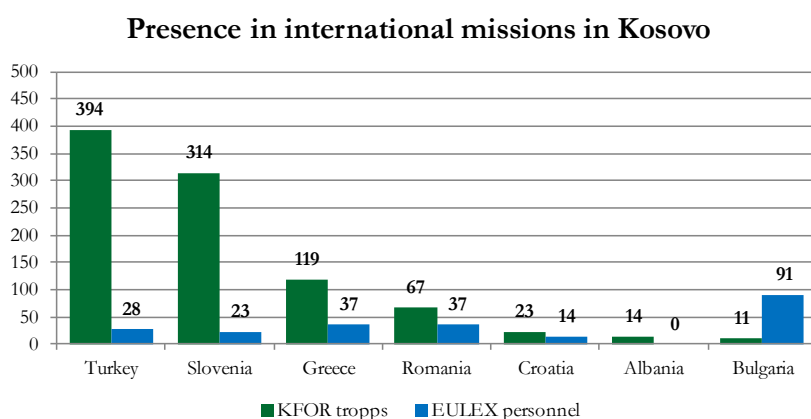
It is also evident in general, that Kosovo officials have paid much more bilateral visits to capitals of the states of the region than the other way around. This is the case except with Greece, where its high level officials have visited Kosovo three times, while Kosovo has visited Greece only one time since the Declaration of Independence, which is surprising given that Greece has not recognized Kosovo. The most intensive political activity has been between Kosovo and Albania, where of all the meetings between the high level officials of Kosovo and of the other states in the region (Presidents, Prime Ministers, and Foreign Ministers), around 30% have taken place between Kosovo and Albania. Additionally, around 13% of all the political activity in the region has been with Serbia, while 12% has been with Slovenia and Croatia each, and 11% with Turkey. Similarly, most of bilateral economic activity in the region has been conducted between Kosovo and Macedonia, Serbia, Albania, and Turkey. Lastly, it is worth mentioning that, after the establishment of diplomatic

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<sup>16</sup> Romania is a Member of the EU that needs to abide by Schengen rules.

relations between Kosovo and the states of the region, it took Kosovo much longer to establish an Embassy and appoint an Ambassador than it did the other states of the region - it took Kosovo at least six additional months to more than 2 years to appoint its first Ambassadors after the states of the region have done so in Prishtina.

Lastly, majority of the states of the region also maintain troops and personnel as part of the international security (KFOR) and rule of law (EULEX) presence in Kosovo. KFOR maintains a total of 4,949 troops as of 19 November 2013<sup>17</sup> among which, 942 or 19% of the troops are from the states of the region. Of the 942 troops of the region, Turkey participates with 394 troops, followed by Slovenia and Greece with 314 troops and 119 troops respectively. EULEX maintains a total of 1,178 international personnel<sup>18</sup>, among which, 230 or 20% of them are from the states of the region. Bulgaria participates with 91 personnel, followed by Greece and Romania with 37 personnel each. So while Bulgaria maintains the least number of troops in KFOR among the states of the region, it provides the largest number of personnel in EULEX



### 1.3 Regional states and Kosovo's international subjectivity

The assistance that Kosovo gets from the states of the region in strengthening its international legitimacy depends on their overall approach and the potential they have to assist Kosovo in this regard. The extent to which some states of the region challenge Kosovo's international legitimacy, also depends on whether or not they have recognized Kosovo, but to a large extent it also depends on their regional policy and ties with Serbia. First, Serbia is the staunchest challenger of Kosovo's international legitimacy. Besides that both parties have entered into a dialogue since 8 March 2011, on good faith and with the purpose to improve the lives of people and increase cooperation, Serbia still continues, as it did since the beginning, to challenge Kosovo's international legitimacy and representation wherever it can and whenever it must. Several months after Kosovo's Declaration of Independence, Serbia submitted a Resolution to the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on 8 October 2008<sup>19</sup> which called the Member States of the United Nations (UN) to back Serbia's request to seek International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruling on the legality of Kosovo's independence.

<sup>17</sup> "Troop Numbers & Contribution Nations", NATO, accessed December 22, 2013, <http://www.aco.nato.int/kfor/about-us/troop-numbers-contributions.aspx>.

<sup>18</sup> KIPRED E-mail communication with EULEX spokesperson, November 7, 2013.

<sup>19</sup> "Backing request by Serbia, General Assembly decides to seek International Court of Justice ruling on legality of Kosovo's independence", United Nations Sixty-Third General Assembly Plenary, 22nd meeting, October 8, 2008, accessed January 23, 2014, <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2008/ga10764.doc.htm>.

Albania is the only country in the region that voted against the resolution<sup>20</sup>, while Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, and Slovenia all abstained, and Bulgaria and Turkey boycotted the voting. On the other hand, three states of the region that supported Serbia's request by voting in support for its Resolution on 8 October 2008 were Greece, Montenegro, Romania, and Serbia. Ironically, one day after Montenegro supported Serbia in this UNGA session, it recognized Kosovo - on 9 October 2008.

States	Serbia's UNGA Resolution (8 October 2008)	ICJ (17 April 2009) written statements	ICJ (24 July 2009) additional statements	ICJ (December 2009) oral hearings
Albania	Voted (against)	Yes (support)	Yes (support)	Yes (support)
B&H	Boycotted	No	No	No
Bulgaria	Abstained	No	No	Yes (support)
Croatia	Abstained	No	No	Yes (support)
Greece	Voted (in support)	No	No	No
Kosovo	n/a	Yes (support)	n/a	Yes (support)
Macedonia	Abstained	No	No	No
Montenegro	Voted (in support)	No	No	No
Romania	Voted (in support)	Yes (against)	No	Yes (against)
Serbia	Voted (in support)	Yes (against)	Yes (against)	Yes (against)
Slovenia	Abstained	Yes (support)	Yes (support)	Yes (support)
Turkey	Boycotted	No	No	No

When Serbia's request went to the ICJ, the latter opened up a deadline (17 April 2009) by when all the interested parties could send their written statements, and another deadline (24 July 2009) by when all the interested parties could send additional comments, and the last deadline (first part of December 2009) by when interested parties could appear during ICJ's hearing and present their oral opinions. Besides Kosovo itself, two other states of the region (Albania and Slovenia) have submitted written statement by 17 April 2009 deadline in support for the legality of Kosovo's Declaration of Independence. On the other hand, besides Serbia, it was only Romania which has submitted a written statement by 17 April 2009 deadline against the legality of Kosovo's independence. Thus, the majority of the states of the region have not submitted any written statements. Slovenia and Albania were also the only states of the region that have submitted additional positive comments by 24 July 2009 deadline, while Serbia was the only one that has submitted additional comments before the 24 July 2009 deadline in support for its cause. When the December 2009 public hearings were held, there were more countries that presented their oral opinions in favour of Kosovo, and they include: Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, and Slovenia, while Romania was the only state of the region that has once more supported Serbia during the December 2009 public hearing at the ICJ.

Additionally, majority of the states of the region supported Kosovo's membership in the IMF and the World Bank, or basically, all the states of the region that have recognized Kosovo have voted in favour of Kosovo's membership in these two international bodies. During the voting session for Kosovo's membership in the IMF held on 3 May 2009, Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Slovenia, and Turkey have all supported Kosovo's membership in the IMF, which

<sup>20</sup> The United States was the only other Member State of the UN that has voted against this Resolution.

Kosovo eventually became a member. Greece and Romania voted against, Serbia boycotted the voting, while BiH abstained. During the voting session for Kosovo's membership in the World Bank held on 3 June 2009, the same countries that voted in support of Kosovo's membership in the IMF, voted in favour of Kosovo membership in the World Bank as well. The votes against, boycotts, and abstentions during the session for Kosovo's membership in the World Bank were also identical to the previous session held for the IMF case.

In addition to supporting Kosovo's international subjectivity and representation in international organisations, Albania and Turkey are the only countries in the region that play an active, if not daily, role in supporting Kosovo to gain more recognitions. While for Albania this is a priority, its influence in the region and the world is much smaller than Turkey's. Kosovo's recognitions are Turkey's priorities when it comes to the latter's regional policy. Given its geographic location, its size, both economic and in terms of population, as well as its political influence it can wage on some countries in its immediate and wider region, as well as on some other actors in the world, Turkey has used every opportunity to help Kosovo gain additional recognitions. Turkey offers unconditional support to Kosovo in this regard, and if and when needed, Turkey has already offered Kosovo access to all its diplomatic service and premises all over the world, unconditionally.<sup>21</sup> Despite the fact that some states of the region have recognized Kosovo, they have actually attempted to challenge its regional and international legitimacy - actions like this are ignited by some of these countries having much better relations with Serbia, something that this study discusses more in detail below.

States	Kosovo's IMF membership (3 May 2009)	Kosovo's World Bank membership (3 June 2009)
Albania	Voted (in support)	Voted (in support)
B&H	Abstained	Abstained
Bulgaria	Voted (in support)	Voted (in support)
Croatia	Voted (in support)	Voted (in support)
Greece	Voted (against)	Voted (against)
Kosovo	n/a	n/a
Macedonia	Voted (in support)	Voted (in support)
Montenegro	Voted (in support)	Voted (in support)
Romania	Voted (against)	Voted (against)
Serbia	Boycotted	Boycotted
Slovenia	Voted (in support)	Voted (in support)
Turkey	Voted (in support)	Voted (in support)

Finally, the EU-Facilitated dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia has been entered by both parties partly because of the common purpose (i.e. EU integration in the future), and partly for different outcomes (i.e. Kosovo, on the one hand, wants to increase its international legitimacy using the dialogue as an example of a responsible international actor, while Serbia, on the other hand, has entered the dialogue to challenge the very international legitimacy Kosovo intends to gain, or potentially delay any gains). Nonetheless, it is worth mentioning that all the states of the region support the dialogue, if not for anything, it provides the security and stability, at least in the short-run, all the states of the region aim to attain. Kosovo did not get any explicit support in the dialogue from any of the states of the region that support the former in this process. No strategic advice or alternative support has been provided to Kosovo when the it was cornered to negotiate its internal arrangement with Serbia, something that most of the states of the region agreed on before the dialogue with Serbia began, thus turning their support more into a rhetorical support. Regardless whether or not the dialogue is challenging Kosovo's internal functioning, which the region and the EU could risk having another BiH in the Balkans, Turkey's Ambassador to Kosovo has summarized

<sup>21</sup> High Turkish political official, interview in Prishtina, October 7, 2013.

the international community's hopes that "The EU cannot afford another BiH in the region, and another Cyprus in the EU";<sup>22</sup> however, this does not go much beyond hopes.

#### 1.4 Methodology

This paper uses various methods to assess Kosovo's position in the region in general, and its bilateral relations with each of the states of the region more specifically. There are two fundamental aspects that this paper observes when analysing Kosovo's bilateral relations with the states of the region. First is the quality of relations which is assessed by examining the following aspects:

1. **Establishment of bilateral relations** - mainly when did X state of the region establish diplomatic relations with Kosovo?
2. **Representation of X state of the region in Kosovo** - mainly whether X state has established either a Liaison Office or an Embassy in Kosovo, and when did that happen?
3. **Representation of Kosovo in X state of the region** - mainly whether Kosovo has established either a Liaison Office or an Embassy in X state of the region, and when did that happen?
4. **Establishment of relations at ambassadorial level** – mainly when relations of X state has been established at ambassadorial level?
5. **Recognition** - mainly when did X state of the region recognize Kosovo
6. **Number of agreements** - mainly how many bilateral agreements has Kosovo signed with X state of the region?
7. **Freedom of movement for Kosovo citizens** - mainly does X state of the region allow the citizens of Kosovo to move freely (without visas), and when did that happen?
8. **Investments of X state in the region** - mainly how much on average did X state of the region invest in Kosovo yearly between 2008 and 2012?

These fundamental aspects are put against the criteria shown in the table below for each and every state of the region, which, when taken in sum and divided by the number of aspects under consideration, produce the quality of bilateral relations between Kosovo and each state of the region:

Assessment Matrix for <u>quality</u> of relations between Kosovo and other states in the region								
Points	Establishment of diplomatic relations	Establishment of relations at ambassadorial level	Representation in Kosovo	Representation in country x	Recognition	Nr. of agreements	Allowing freedom of movement for RKS citizens	Investment (in millions of Euros)
4	2008	2008	Embassy (above 4 years)	Embassy (above 4 years)	within 1 month	More than 15	2008-2009	Above 25
3	2009	2009	Embassy (2-4 years)	Embassy (2-4 years)	within 6 months	10-15	2010	15-24
2	2010	2010	Embassy (under 2 years)	Embassy (under 2 years)	within 12 months	5-9	2011	5-14
1	2011	2011	Office	Office	within 24 months	1-4	2012	2-4
0	no dip rel	no	No Office	No Office	Not recognized	No agreements	Denied	Under 2

<sup>22</sup> High Turkish political official, interview in Prishtina, October 7, 2013.

So, the quality of relations are then defined depending on the average score each state of the region gets after adding up the points for each fundamental aspect and dividing them with the total number of aspects under consideration, based on the ranks shown in table below. So, if bilateral relations between Kosovo and a certain state of the region receive an average score of 3.6 based on the above aspects, than those relations are defined as *excellent*. Likewise, if bilateral relations between Kosovo and a certain state of the region receive an average score of 1.5 based on the above aspects, than those relations are defined as *fair*, and so on. For detailed scoring of each state in this regard see Annex 2.

Points	Quality of relations
3.6-4.0	Excellent
3.1- 3.5	Very good
2.1-3.0	Good
1.1-2.0	Fair
0.0-1.0	Poor

Second is the intensity of relations which is assessed by examining the following fundamental aspects:

1. **Visits/meetings on Presidential level** - mainly the number of bilateral<sup>23</sup> visits/meetings that have taken place between the President(s) of Kosovo and the President(s) of X state of the region
2. **Visits/meetings on Prime Ministerial level** - mainly the number of bilateral visits/meetings that have taken place between the Prime Minister(s) of Kosovo and the Prime Minister(s) of X state of the region
3. **Visits/meetings on Foreign Ministerial level** - mainly the number of visits/meetings that have taken place between the Foreign Minister(s) of Kosovo and the Foreign Ministers(s) of X state of the region
4. **Trade volume** - mainly the trade exchange volume between Kosovo and X state of the region

Similar to the method used to assess the quality of relations, these fundamental aspects of intensity of bilateral relations are put against the criteria shown in table below for each and every state of the region, which, when taken in sum and divided by the number of aspects under consideration, produce the intensity of bilateral relations between Kosovo and each state of the region:

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<sup>23</sup> Note: When analysing relations with Serbia, for analytical purposes, the visits that take place between the two states in Brussels are not taken into account.



Assessment Matrix for <u>intensity</u> of relations between Kosovo and other states in the region				
Points	Presidential visits/meetings	Prime Ministerial visits/meetings	Foreign Ministerial visits/meetings	Trade volume (in millions of Euros)
4	above 10	above 10	above 10	Above 200
3	7-9	7-9	7-9	100-199
2	4-6	4-6	4-6	50-99
1	1-3	1-3	1-3	20-49
0	No visits	No visits	No visits	under 20

So, the intensity of relations are then defined depending on the average score that each country gets after adding up the points for each element and dividing them with the total number of aspects, based on the ranks shown in table below. This means, for instance, that if bilateral relations between Kosovo and a certain state of the region receive an average score of 3.5 based on the above aspects, than those relations are defined as *very intensive*. Likewise, if bilateral relations between Kosovo and a certain state of the region receive an average score of 1.5 based on the elements above, than those relations are defined as *moderately intensive*, and so on. For detailed scoring of each state in this regard see Annex 3.

Points	Intensity of relations
3.1-4.0	Very intensive
2.1-3.0	Intensive
1.0-2.0	Moderately
0.0-0.9	Inactive

This methodology is used first because the following elements when taken together provide an approximate picture of how Kosovo's bilateral relations with each country in the region stands. It also allows to compare the quality and intensity of Kosovo's bilateral relations between the countries of the region. The matrices that are used as part of this methodology, thus, are only for the purposes of analysing Kosovo's relations with the region, and this does not prejudge the quality or intensity of Kosovo's bilateral relations for states that are outside the region under consideration in this study.

In addition to defining the *quality* and *intensity* of relations between Kosovo and each state of the region in a more quantitative score based analysis, other aspects such as the presence of troops and personnel of international missions in Kosovo such as KFOR and EULEX from the states of the region; discussions about any open issues; discussions about more complex disputes; provisions of assistance in regional and international fora; the position of Kosovo in regional countries' foreign and regional policies; statements, and so on are also taken into account in qualitative terms in order to support the quantitative basis of the analysis.

The main sources used as part of this methodology are: country report, bilateral agreements, official documents, interviews, published data from relevant offices and institutions. The primary source of information for state visits and other official and unofficial visits and meetings of Kosovo's state officials with their counterparts in the region are the official websites of the Office of the President

(OP), the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). Each of these institutions regularly publish the visits and meetings that their high officials take or attend both in and outside Kosovo.<sup>24</sup> The period of the visits and meetings which this paper considers includes a period of more than five and a half years, i.e. from 17 February 2008 to 30 September 2013. Note that the MFA only began to register its meetings and visits on its website from 9 May 2008, because it had not been established with the Declaration of Independence on 17 February 2008.

Caveats to the methodology:

- Qualifications: When defining the quality of relations between *excellent* and *poor* and the intensity of relations between *very intensive* and *inactive*, this does not mean that this is also the perception of state officials on both sides. For instance, in some of the interviews with the Ambassadors of some of the regional states present in Kosovo, they have defined their state's relations with Kosovo as *excellent* and *very intensive*, where on the other hand according to this methodology this study uses, they turn out to be *very good* and *moderately intensive*, for instance. In this regard, the methodology used in defining the quality and intensity of relations is valid only from comparative perspective and only in the context of the region that this study considers.
- Sources: Note has been taken that the number of visits and meetings published on websites of the OP, the OPM, and the MFA, may not be complete; nonetheless, taking into account that this analysis covers a period longer than five and a half years, the information used in those website do provide a realistic picture of the trends and comparisons between countries. In cases when a visit or a meeting has been spotted through another research method, they have also been considered and counted for, but these additional methods account for only a small share of the entire information which is acquired through the initial method - the OP, the OPM, and the MFA websites.
- The period: Although this paper analyzes the period which ends on 30 September 2013, in some relevant cases, which are important to fill an impotent gap to the analysis, it uses even more recent information.

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<sup>24</sup> The Office of the Protocol at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has not responded to KIPRED's request to obtain this information from the organ that, according to the relevant law, should possess such information.

## 2 KOSOVO AND THE NEIGHBOURING STATES

### 2.1 Foreign and regional policies

All four of Kosovo's neighbouring states' (Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia) foreign and regional policies and objectives share more common grounds than not; though, some differences remain. Among the policies and views that they have in common are their focus on promoting and enhancing good neighbourly relations, although, according to their foreign and regional policies it is clear that these parameters remain tightly linked with and are more a reactionary undertaking to Euro-Atlantic integration projects and the associated conditions.

Besides their common "good neighbourly relations" policy that Kosovo's neighbours share, most of them give additional importance and attention to a specific neighbouring state with which they share either cultural, identity, or historical past or background, and as such tend to keep more special bilateral relations than with the other states. For instance, in addition to stating that its foreign policy aim is to develop "good relations with neighbouring states", Kosovo attaches greater importance to its relations with Albania, having one of its foreign policy documents state that "[c]ooperation with Republic of Albania takes a special place in Kosovo Republic foreign policy"<sup>25</sup>. Likewise, in addition to developing good relations and communications with mutual respect with all the neighbours, Montenegro attaches "special importance [...] to relations with Serbia, which entails the relationship of equal partnership and mutual respect".<sup>26</sup> In its regional policy, Albania also pays more attention to specific issues in relation to specific neighbouring states. For instance, Albania aims to play an active role in regional peace and security by supporting "the process of the settlement of the final status for Kosovo", and in the case of Macedonia, by "support[ing] Ohrid Agreement, recognizing it as the sole platform for the prosperity of Macedonia and the good, friendly and neighbourly relations between two countries"<sup>27</sup>.

Kosovo's neighbours share other foreign policy objectives as well. Integration into the EU remains a prime objective and a strategic interest for all Kosovo's neighbours in the immediate future as well as in the long run. Kosovo's neighbours, however, face various challenges to achieving this aim. For instance, in order to attain the goal of advancing towards the EU accession process, Albania focuses on providing "serious support for the abolishment of transnational organized crime and illicit trafficking, the eradication of corruption" and so on<sup>28</sup>. Macedonia, on the other hand, faces impediments that are of almost complete different nature from those that Albania faces. Besides that Macedonia is committed to its EU accession and integration project, Greece is considered to be a hurdle in this process because it has conditions Macedonia's progress, not only towards the EU, but towards NATO as well, with the modification of its current constitutional name, which Macedonia apparently cannot keep. Therefore, solving these major open issues with Greece is another key objective for Macedonia's foreign and regional policy. Montenegro and Serbia maintain EU

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<sup>25</sup> "Kosovo Foreign Objectives" Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kosovo, accessed October 26, 2013, <http://www.mfa-ks.net/repository/docs/Kosovoforeignobjectives.pdf>.

<sup>26</sup> "Foreign Policy", MFA Montenegro.

<sup>27</sup> "Mission of MFA", MFA Albania.

<sup>28</sup> "Mission of MFA", MFA Albania.

integration as a high priority as well; however, Serbia still maintains "both EU and Kosovo"<sup>29</sup> policy when it comes to dealing with its objective for EU integration and the associated conditionality for normalization of relations with Kosovo and maintaining good neighbourly relations on the one hand, and protecting its sovereignty and territorial integrity on the other.<sup>30</sup>

An additional foreign policy objective in which Serbia differs in comparison to, not only neighbouring states, but also other states in the region, is its commitment to NATO. Albania has already become a member of the Alliance in April 2009<sup>31</sup>, and Macedonia, Montenegro, and Kosovo have explicitly expressed their objective to join the alliance - something they keep alongside their efforts to joining the EU. Although, Serbia is one of the signatories of NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme along with Macedonia and Montenegro, it has claimed to maintain military neutrality.<sup>32</sup> The Kosovo issues is yet again a factor that has led Serbia to maintain neutrality, especially towards NATO, which was declared in 2007 while referring to NATO's "illegal bombardment of Serbia without a Security Council decision" and "the rejected Ahtisaari's plan, which determines that NATO is 'ultimate supervisory authority' in an 'independent Kosovo'".<sup>33</sup> Apart from Serbia, full membership in NATO remains a foreign policy priority of Macedonia, Montenegro, and Kosovo as a shorter term objective - before joining the EU. Montenegro, for instance, believes that "NATO integration would speed up EU integration" and that integration into NATO is "closely tied to Montenegro's integration into the EU, as these are two parallel and compatible processes".<sup>34</sup>

When it comes to the partner states or bilateral relations that bare significant weight for each of Kosovo's neighbouring states, they all prioritize bilateral relations based on the interests of each state separately. For instance, all the neighbouring states of Kosovo consider relations with the US to be special and of high strategic priority. For Albania, USA is the "irreplaceable ally of the new Albanian democracy".<sup>35</sup> Macedonia is also committed to "constant strengthening of its strategies partnership with the US".<sup>36</sup> Montenegro and Serbia also attach a priority to further strengthen the relations with the US, but they attach a special importance to the US as much as they do to their other bilateral strategic partners, such as Serbia's "four pillars" of foreign policy which include: the US, the EU, Russia, and China.<sup>37</sup> After the general election in may 2012, the new Government of Serbia, has also included Japan as a strategic interest for Serbia, and has reshuffled the list of priorities; nonetheless, the core foreign policy objectives have not changed.<sup>38</sup> In terms of bilateral relations and strategic ties,

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<sup>29</sup> Milan Milenkovic, "Is there a change in Serbian foreign Policy", <http://www.transconflict.com/2013/02/is-there-a-change-in-serbian-foreign-policy-102/>

<sup>30</sup> "Security Issues", Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Serbia, accessed January 14, 2014, <http://www.mfa.gov.rs/en/foreign-policy/security-issues>.

<sup>31</sup> "Signatures of Partnership of Peace Framework Document", NATO, accessed December 4, 2013, [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_82584.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_82584.htm).

<sup>32</sup> "Resolution on protection of sovereignty, territorial integrity and constitutional order of Serbia adopted, report from Government of Serbia", December 2007, 26, accessed December 24, 2013, <http://reliefweb.int/report/serbia/resolution-protection-sovereignty-territorial-integrity-and-constitutional-order>.

<sup>33</sup> "Resolution on protection of sovereignty, territorial integrity and constitutional order of Serbia adopted, report from Government of Serbia".

<sup>34</sup> "Foreign Policy", MFA Montenegro.

<sup>35</sup> "Mission of MFA", MFA Albania.

<sup>36</sup> "Goals and Priorities", Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Macedonia, accessed November 14, 2013, <http://www.mfa.gov.mk/?q=node/411&language=en-gb>

<sup>37</sup> Milan Milenkovic, "Is there a change in Serbian foreign Policy".

<sup>38</sup> Milan Milenkovic, "Is there a change in Serbian foreign Policy".

Montenegro maintains similar objectives to Serbia, and thus focuses on Russia and China, in addition to the EU, NATO, and the US, in the context of enhancing bilateral relations with global actors. What is particular about Montenegro's bilateral objectives with the region, is that it considers all countries of former Yugoslavia as neighbours, including the neighbours of the former Yugoslavia itself, such as Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Greece.<sup>39</sup>

As for Albania's key partners in their foreign policy, besides the EU integration process and strong ties with the US, their priority is also to maintain close ties with individual EU Member States which are considered of a higher priority for Albania.<sup>40</sup> Albania prioritizes its bilateral relations with Italy and Greece, and will have a particular focus on the UK, Germany, France, Italy, and with Austria with whom Albania has traditional ties. In addition to Austria, Albania maintains traditional ties with Turkey as well and "will continue to nurture the full political will of Albania for upgrading the exchanges in all fields".<sup>41</sup> Albania, furthermore, intends to strengthen and enrich relations with other states such as China, Israel, Japan, India, Middle Eastern countries, and Canada in the area of trade and economy as well as politics.<sup>42</sup>

It is clear that there are many foreign and regional policies that Kosovo's neighbours have in common. Nonetheless, there are some unique foreign and regional policy that each of the states maintain pertaining to their context, interest, traditional and cultural ties, and so on.

## 2.2 Quality of relations with the neighbouring states

### 2.2.1 Bilateral relations with ALBANIA

Among the four neighbouring states, Albania is the only one that Kosovo enjoys *excellent* bilateral relations with. In fact, after Turkey, Albania is the only state in the entire region with whom Kosovo enjoys excellent relations. These excellent relations derive from the overall score Albania gets in fundamental aspects of its bilateral relations with Kosovo. First, compared to the other neighbouring states, as well as those in the entire region, Albania is one of the first countries to recognize Kosovo's independence, in fact the recognition was deposited a day after its Declaration of Independence on 18 February 2008<sup>43</sup>. The diplomatic relations were also established on the same day. It's worth noting that Albania appointed its first Ambassador to Prishtina (Islam Llauka) on 11 February 2009<sup>44</sup>, close to a year after it recognized Kosovo, and has, since then, continued his uninterrupted service in Prishtina. Kosovo

Kosovo's quality of relations with the neighbouring states

	State	Points	Quality
	Turkey	4.00	Excellent
2	<b>Albania</b>	3.88	Excellent
	Slovenia	3.25	Very Good
4	<b>Macedonia</b>	3.13	Very Good
	Croatia	2.63	Good
	Bulgaria	2.75	Good
7	<b>Montenegro</b>	1.88	Fair
8	<b>Serbia</b>	0.75	Poor
	Greece	0.25	Poor
	Romania	0.13	Poor
	B&H	0.00	Poor

<sup>39</sup> "Foreign Policy", MFA Montenegro.

<sup>40</sup> "Mission of MFA", MFA Albania.

<sup>41</sup> "Mission of MFA", MFA Albania.

<sup>42</sup> "Mission of MFA", MFA Albania.

<sup>43</sup> Recognitions of the Republic of Kosovo, Kosovo Thanks You, official page supported by MFA Kosovo, accessed January 6m 2014, <http://www.kosovothanksyou.com/>

<sup>44</sup> "Lauka dekretohet ambasador i Shqipërisë në Kosovë", 19 January, 2009, <http://www.kosovapress.com/sq/arkiva/lauka-dekretohet-ambasador-i-shqiperise-ne-kosove-62541/?old=1>

on the other hand appointed its first Ambassador to Tirana (Gazmend Pula) more than a year and a half after the Declaration of Independence. Kosovo had already deployed Mr. Pula as Charge d'Affaires earlier in October 2008.<sup>45</sup> Unlike the diplomatic representation of Albania in Prishtina, Kosovo's representation at Ambassadorial level was interrupted for longer than a year and a half; after Mr. Pula's service ended in August 2010, Kosovo appointed the next Ambassador (Sylejman Selimi) on 20 March 2012.

Second, Albania also ranks first among Kosovo's neighbouring countries, and second in the region with the number of bilateral agreements that both states have signed, 17 in total.<sup>46</sup> In addition, there is also a Memorandum of Understanding, an Extension of an Agreement, and another one for the Increase of Cooperation that were signed between the two states. Considering a large number of agreements that have been signed with Albania, compared to the number of agreements with other states of the region, the nature of these agreements is quite diverse and they range from security cooperation, cross border cooperation, and various technical matters. There is only one agreement that deals with cooperation of both states in the field of education, however.

Lastly, among the neighbouring states Albania tops the list of investors in Kosovo, and ranks third in the entire region after Slovenia and Turkey. Yearly average investments of Albania to Kosovo between 2008-2012 exceed 16.2 million Euro.<sup>47</sup> Besides diplomatic and business presence in Kosovo, Albania is also the only Kosovo's neighbour that maintains troops as part of NATO led KFOR mission in Kosovo, 14 in total.<sup>48</sup>

### **2.2.2 Bilateral relations with MACEDONIA**

Among the four neighbouring states, Macedonia enjoys *very good* bilateral relations with Kosovo, and thus is ranked second among Kosovo's neighbours and fourth in the region in terms of the quality of bilateral relations with Kosovo. Similarly to Kosovo's *excellent* relations with Albania, Kosovo's *very good* relations with Macedonia derive from the overall score Macedonia gets in fundamental aspects of its bilateral relations with Kosovo. First, unlike the other countries in the region, most of whom recognized Kosovo either immediately or within first 6 months, Macedonia recognized Kosovo on 9 October 2008, around 8 months after it has declared its independence, making Macedonia one of the last states in the region, and the 50th in the world to recognize Kosovo.<sup>49</sup> Delays in recognizing Kosovo came as a result of various contemplations; Macedonia feared that Serbia would severely worsen relations with Macedonia, as the former President of Serbia, Boris Tadic, told the then Macedonian President, Branko Crvenkovski that recognition of Kosovo would mean "interference with [Serbia's] internal affairs and it would definitely worsen [their] relations".<sup>50</sup> This became evident when, as a response to Kosovo's recognition, Serbia expelled Macedonia's Ambassador to Belgrade<sup>51</sup>,

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<sup>45</sup> "First Kosovo Ambassadors Begin Missions", accessed November 15, 2013, <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/first-kosovo-ambassadors-begin-missions>.

<sup>46</sup> International Agreements, Official Gazette of the Republic of Kosovo, accessed November 20, 2013, <http://gazetazyrtare.rks-gov.net/MN.aspx>.

<sup>47</sup> "Kosovo in Regional Context: Economic and Trade Relations", KIPRED, 26-29.

<sup>48</sup> "Key facts and figures", KFOR, November 30, 2012, accessed January 21, 2014, [http://www.nato.int/kfor/structur/nations/placemap/kfor\\_placemat.pdf](http://www.nato.int/kfor/structur/nations/placemap/kfor_placemat.pdf).

<sup>49</sup> See the countries that have recognized Kosovo at, <http://www.kosovothanksyou.com/>.

<sup>50</sup> "When will Macedonia Recognize Kosovo", accessed January 19, 2014, <http://www.balcanicaucaso.org/eng/Regions-and-countries/Macedonia/When-Will-Macedonia-Recognize-Kosovo-43368>.

<sup>51</sup> "Serbia Expels Macedonian, Montenegrin Envoys Over Kosovo", Deutsche Welle (DW), 10 October, 2008, <http://www.dw.de/serbia-expels-macedonian-montenegrin-envoys-over-kosovo/a-3704625-1>.

though this was a common practice by Serbia at the beginning with almost every state that recognized Kosovo.<sup>52</sup> Also, in a survey conducted in 2008 after Kosovo had declared its independence, 60% of Macedonians were against Macedonia's recognition of Kosovo, so there was an assumed or lingering public pressure on the Government from the Macedonian community as well.<sup>53</sup>

Macedonia seemed to be under "pressure" by its Western allies to move on with recognition as well.<sup>54</sup> Considering that such enquires were dispatched by countries which Macedonia had already defined to be in its foreign policy interest, mainly EU and NATO Member States, Macedonia decided, on 9 October 2008, to recognize Kosovo; however, it tried, unsuccessfully, to make recognition conditional to border demarcation between the two parties. Besides delaying recognition, it took also awhile before Macedonia established diplomatic relations and relations at ambassadorial level with Kosovo, which it had, once again, tried to make it conditional to working out border demarcation.<sup>55and56</sup> After being successful this time in having the agreement Border Physical Demarcation, Macedonia established diplomatic relations with Kosovo on 18 October 2009<sup>57</sup>, the date when the demarcation agreement was signed, which is a year after the official recognition of Kosovo.<sup>58</sup> The same survey that showed discontent among 60% of Macedonians regarding Kosovo's recognition, 95% of Albanians in Macedonia were in favour of Macedonia to recognize Kosovo.<sup>59</sup> As a result the two major Albanian political parties in Macedonia pressed on the Macedonian state officials to speed up recognition.<sup>60and61</sup>

It took longer for Macedonia to also appoint an Ambassador to Prishtina. A year and a half after the recognition, Macedonia decided, on 1 January, 2010, to appoint its first Ambassador to Prishtina (Stojan Karajanov).<sup>62</sup> After Mr. Karajanov's mandate ended in July 2013,<sup>63</sup> the new Ambassador of Macedonia to Prishtina has not been appointed yet. It is worth mentioning that Macedonia had maintained its presence in Kosovo even before Macedonia recognized Kosovo, and even before Kosovo declared its independence. It maintained its presence through its Trade and Economic Office first and then through its Liaison Office of the Republic of Macedonia in Kosovo. On the other hand, it took Kosovo more than two and a half years after the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two states, to assign its first Ambassador (Ylber Hysa) to Macedonia, which it

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<sup>52</sup> [Ibid.](#)

<sup>53</sup> Pg.47, "The Independence of Kosovo and the Consolidation of Macedonia", Zhidas Daskalovski and Dane Taleski at,

<http://www.isn.ethz.ch/Digital-Library/Publications/Detail/?ots591=0c54e3b3-1e9c-be1e-2c24-a6a8c7060233&lng=en&id=109310>

<sup>54</sup> "When will Macedonia Recognize Kosovo", accessed 19 January, 2014, <http://www.balkanicaucaso.org/eng/Regions-and-countries/Macedonia/When-Will-Macedonia-Recognize-Kosovo-43368>,

<sup>55</sup> "Report: Macedonia, Kosovo to agree on border demarcation, diplomatic relations soon", 16 October, 2009, <http://macedoniaonline.eu/content/view/full/8576/2/>

<sup>56</sup> "Marredheniet diplomatike Kosove-Maqedoni pas mbarimit te demarkacionit", 21 August, 2009,

<http://www.albeu.com/shqip/ri/2009/08/21/marredheniet-diplomatike-kosove-maqedoni-pas-mbarimit-te-demarkacionit/12259/>

<sup>57</sup> KIPRED source from Kosovo Ministry of Foreign Affairs, December 2013.

<sup>58</sup> See Agreement at, <http://gazetazyrtare.rks-gov.net/Documents/shqip-179.pdf>

<sup>59</sup> Pg.47, "The Independence of Kosovo and the Consolidation of Macedonia", Zhidas Daskalovski and Dane Taleski

<http://www.isn.ethz.ch/Digital-Library/Publications/Detail/?ots591=0c54e3b3-1e9c-be1e-2c24-a6a8c7060233&lng=en&id=109310>

<sup>60</sup> "PDSH: Urgjentisht të njihet pavarësia e Kosovës", 29 September, 2008 at, <http://www.telegrafi.com/lajme/pdsh-urgjentisht-te-njihet-pavaresia-e-kosoves-2-2330.html>

<sup>61</sup> "When will Macedonia Recognize Kosovo", <http://www.balkanicaucaso.org/eng/Regions-and-countries/Macedonia/When-Will-Macedonia-Recognize-Kosovo-43368>

<sup>62</sup> See biography of Ambassador at, <http://www.missions.gov.mk/prishtina/embassy/biography-of-ambassador/>

<sup>63</sup> President Jahjaga meeting with Stojan Karajanov , <http://www.president-ksgov.net/?page=1,6,2971>

did only on 25 May 2012<sup>64</sup>. Prior to Hysa's appointment, Kosovo maintained its presence in Macedonia through its Chargé d'Affaires, Mr. Skender Dervishi, who was appointed in March 2010.

Second, it is the number of agreements that mostly help Macedonia's score in having good bilateral relations with Kosovo. Macedonia ranks second among Kosovo's neighbouring countries, and third in the region with the number of bilateral agreements that both states have signed, 16 in total.<sup>65</sup> The nature of these agreements is quite diverse; agreements regarding economic cooperation as well as security and rule of law are the ones that characterize mostly the nature of agreements between Kosovo and Macedonia. Agreements on the fields of culture and medicine are also present among others. Lastly, Macedonia is the second largest investors in Kosovo, among the neighbouring states after Albania, and the fifth largest investor among the other countries of the region. The yearly average investments of Macedonia to Kosovo between 2008-2012 are close to 2.5 million Euros.<sup>66</sup>

### 2.2.3 *Bilateral relations with MONTENEGRO*

Among the four neighbouring states, Montenegro enjoys only *fair* bilateral relations with Kosovo, and thus is ranked third among Kosovo's four neighbours and only seventh in the region in terms of the quality of bilateral relations it enjoys with Kosovo. Similarly to Kosovo's *excellent* and *very good* relations with Albania and Macedonia respectively, *fair* relations with Montenegro derive from the overall score Montenegro gets in fundamental aspects of its bilateral relations with Kosovo. First, unlike the other countries in the region, most of whom recognized Kosovo either immediately or within first 6 months, Montenegro recognized Kosovo on 9 October 2008, around 8 months after it had declared its independence, making Montenegro, just like Macedonia, one of the last countries in the region, and the 49<sup>th</sup> in the world to recognize Kosovo.<sup>67</sup> It seemed that the recognition from Montenegro and Macedonia came in a coordinated move, since both countries faced similar "relationship crisis" with Serbia, who had threatened Montenegro, just like it did Macedonia, that the relations would worsen should Montenegro recognize Kosovo. Montenegro, unlike Macedonia, had even more advanced relations with Serbia, as it had broken off of the loose federation with Serbia only around two years before it recognized Kosovo. Moreover, Serbs in Montenegro are the second largest ethnicity and constitute close to 30% of the population.<sup>68</sup>

Second, Montenegro recognized Kosovo only a day after it supported Serbia and its Resolution at the UNGA which called for the legality of Kosovo's independence to be reviewed by the ICJ.<sup>69</sup> The recognition by Montenegro was not welcomed in Serbia, whereby, just like with Macedonia and other states that have recognized Kosovo, Serbia withdrew its Ambassador and the then Serbia's Foreign Minister, Vuk Jeremic, said that Montenegrin Ambassador to Belgrade "was no longer welcome".<sup>70</sup> Additionally, the pro-Serb opposition in Montenegro organized protests against the

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<sup>64</sup> "Skender Dervishi, ambasador i Kosovës në Shkup", <http://web.kosovalbaner.com/vm/2010/03/skender-dervishi-ambasador-i-kosoves-ne-shkup/>

<sup>65</sup> See all the International Agreements of the Republic of Kosovo, <http://gazetazyrtare.rks-gov.net/MN.aspx>

<sup>66</sup> "Kosovo in Regional Context: Economic and Trade Relations", 59-61.

<sup>67</sup> Recognitions of the Republic of Kosovo, accessed January 6, 2014, <http://www.kosovothankyou.com/>.

<sup>68</sup> "Census of population, households and dwellings in Montenegro 2011", Statistical Office of Montenegro, No. 83, July 12, 2013, accessed January 16, 2014, [http://www.monstat.org/userfiles/file/popis2011/saopstenje/saopstenje\(1\).pdf](http://www.monstat.org/userfiles/file/popis2011/saopstenje/saopstenje(1).pdf).

<sup>69</sup> "Why did Montenegro recognize independence of Kosovo", Blogactiv, October 25, 2008, accessed January 2, 2014, <http://montenegro.blogactiv.eu/2008/10/25/why-did-montenegro-recognize-independence-of-kosovo/>.

<sup>70</sup> "Montenegro, Macedonia recognize Kosovo statehood", accessed December 3, 2013, [http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/world/2008-10-09-1157695074\\_x.htm](http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/world/2008-10-09-1157695074_x.htm).



government, which had responded that the recognition of Kosovo "is not against Serbia, but for our future".<sup>71</sup> Apparently, just like Macedonia, Montenegro seemed to be under pressure from the EU and NATO key Member States, and judging from the reality on the ground, Montenegro chose, although not with full will, the European path.<sup>72</sup>

It took Montenegro longer than Macedonia to establish diplomatic relations with Kosovo, which it did on 15 January 2010, almost a year and a half after it recognized Kosovo. Montenegro has not conditioned Kosovo's recognition or the establishment of diplomatic relations. It has, however, conditioned the appointment of its Ambassador to Kosovo, which was on hold since the diplomatic relations were established, with the recognition of Montenegrins living in Kosovo as a community with full constitutional rights that the other communities in Kosovo enjoy.<sup>73</sup> Montenegro did appoint its Charge d'Affairs (Radovan Miljanic) on 30 July 2013, and awaits for the Constitutional amendments to take place in Kosovo for the diplomatic relations to increase to an Ambassadorial level. Until September 2013, besides several promises, the amendments have not taken place,<sup>74</sup> but are expected by the end of 2013.<sup>75</sup> On the other hand, Kosovo has neither appointed an envoy, nor opened an Embassy in Montenegro yet.

Third, Montenegro ranks third among Kosovo's neighbouring states, and eighth in the region with the number of bilateral agreements that both states have signed, only 3 in total.<sup>76</sup> Actually, among states in the region that have recognized Kosovo, Montenegro bottoms the list with the number of agreement signed with Kosovo. The agreements pertain to cooperation in customs and basic registers of persons for administrative purposes. Kosovo has yet to sign a border demarcation agreement with Montenegro, a process which has already begun.<sup>77</sup> A series of other agreements between Kosovo and Montenegro are planned to be discussed that pertain to the fields of economy, infrastructure such as: railway and highway projects, as well as investments and tourism.<sup>78</sup>

#### **2.2.4 Bilateral relations/contacts with SERBIA**

Serbia is the only state among Kosovo's neighbours, and among the four countries in the entire region that does not recognize Kosovo. As such, Serbia and Kosovo do not have any bilateral relations, and the quality of relations, expressed in terms of contacts at different levels, remain *poor*. Kosovo's *poor* relations with Serbia derive from the overall score Serbia gets in fundamental aspects of its relations/contacts with Kosovo. Serbia's current Constitution which was adopted in 2006, after Montenegro seceded from the former, still holds Kosovo as its province and according to its Constitution "[t]he substantial autonomy of the Autonomous province of Kosovo and Metohija

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<sup>71</sup> "Montenegro, Macedonia recognize Kosovo statehood".

<sup>72</sup> Why did Montenegro recognize independence of Kosovo".

<sup>73</sup> "Kosovo must recognize Montenegrins", accessed December 4, 2013,

[http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics.php?yyyy=2009&mm=12&dd=31&nav\\_id=64150](http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics.php?yyyy=2009&mm=12&dd=31&nav_id=64150).

<sup>74</sup> "The issue of Montenegrin citizens in Kosovo is considered as technical issue and not an intentional stalling", accessed December 4, 2013, <http://www.balkan.eu.com/issue-montenegrin-citizens-kosovo-considered-technical-issue-intentional-stalling/>.

<sup>75</sup> "Montenegro to boost diplomatic ties with Kosovo", accessed December 4, 2013,

<http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/montenegro-to-strengthen-diplomatic-relations-with-kosovo>.

<sup>76</sup> International Agreements, Official Gazette of Kosovo.

<sup>77</sup> "Montenegro and Kosovo start demarcation process", accessed December 4, 2013,

<http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/montenegro-launches-border-demarcation-with-kosovo>.

<sup>78</sup> "Kosovo and Montenegro aim to strengthen economic cooperation", accessed December 6, 2013,

[http://www.setimes.com/cocoon/setimes/xhtml/en\\_GB/features/setimes/features/2012/01/18/feature-02](http://www.setimes.com/cocoon/setimes/xhtml/en_GB/features/setimes/features/2012/01/18/feature-02) and <http://mzhe.rks.gov.net/?page=2,42,661>.

shall be regulated by the special law which shall be adopted in accordance with the proceedings envisaged for amending the Constitution".<sup>79</sup> Serbia has understood that maintaining Kosovo as part of its current legal framework as stipulated in its Constitution is not realistic; this is more not due to Serbia's will, but more due to a number of regional and international circumstances such as: first, the presence of NATO-led Kosovo Force (KFOR) troops which have the responsibility to protect Kosovo's territory, but that are present according to United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1244 which recognizes Serbia's sovereignty over Kosovo; second, this makes it impossible for Serbia to use its Constitutional provisions, including force, to return its province as provided in its Constitution; third, given that Serbia has defined EU membership to be one of its highest priorities, it is being conditioned by the latter to find a compromise solution, and has factually divided Kosovo from Serbia in its EU accession evaluation process, i.e. Serbia's visa liberalisation is effective only for the territory that excludes Kosovo and that all the EU requirements for Serbia pertain only to its current territorial set-up excluding Kosovo.

In addition to its EU membership aims, Serbia maintains another (main) foreign policy objective, which is "the protection of sovereignty and territorial integrity of the R. of Serbia and finding a compromise solution regarding Kosovo and Metohija by winning the broadest possible support to the positions of the R. of Serbia at multilateral gatherings".<sup>80</sup> In light of these two, what seem to be opposing, foreign policy objectives, Serbia has adopted "both EU and Kosovo" rhetorical foreign policy which it continues to maintain.

Within more than three years of the Declaration of Independence, Kosovo and Serbia have continued pursuing their own foreign policy objective, having the former chase for new recognitions and strengthened international legitimacy, while the later going about its way looking for partners that can stall Kosovo endeavours. One of the first major attempts by Serbia to stall Kosovo's diplomatic undertaking to gain more recognitions was the UN Resolution that it has drafted to seek ICJ's advisory ruling on legality of Kosovo's independence. This was adopted at the UNGA on 8 October 2008.<sup>81</sup> A week after 22 July 2010 ICJ's advisory opinion that Kosovo did not violate international law<sup>82</sup>, on 28 July 2010 Serbia submitted another draft resolution to the UNGA calling for new negotiations regarding Kosovo status, which most of the EU Member States and the USA were opposed to.<sup>83</sup> Nonetheless, another compromise UNGA resolution co-sponsored by Serbia and the EU was submitted and adopted on 9 September 2010, which, unlike the previous draft resolution submitted by Serbia, it "welcomed the European Union's readiness to facilitate dialogue between Serbia and Kosovo over the province's unilateral declaration of independence".<sup>84</sup> This was the

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<sup>79</sup> Article 182, Serbia's Constitution, accessed November 24, 2013, [http://www.srbija.gov.rs/cinjenice\\_o\\_srbiji/ustav\\_odredbe.php?id=225](http://www.srbija.gov.rs/cinjenice_o_srbiji/ustav_odredbe.php?id=225).

<sup>80</sup> "General Directorate for Multilateral Cooperation", Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Serbia, accessed November 15, 2013, <http://www.mfa.gov.rs/en/foreign-policy/multilateral-issues>.

<sup>81</sup> "Backing request by Serbia, General Assembly decides to seek International Court of Justice ruling on legality of Kosovo's independence", General Assembly.

<sup>82</sup> "Accordance with international law of the unilateral declaration of independence in respect of Kosovo (Request for Advisory Opinion)", October 10, 2008, accessed November 24, 2013, <http://www.icj-cij.org/docket/index.php?p1=3&p2=4&k=21&case=141&code=kos&p3=0>.

<sup>83</sup> "Serbia submits Kosovo draft to UN GA", accessed December 4, 2013, [http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics.php?yyyy=2010&mm=07&dd=28&nav\\_id=68748](http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics.php?yyyy=2010&mm=07&dd=28&nav_id=68748).

"Adopting consensus resolution, General Assembly acknowledges world court opinion on Kosovo, welcomes European Union readiness to facilitate process of dialogue", United Nations Sixty-four General Assembly Plenary, 120th meeting, September 9, 2010, accessed January 6, 2014, <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2010/ga10980.doc.htm>.

beginning of the end for Kosovo's and Serbia's independent diplomatic skirmishes over Kosovo status, and around three years after the Declaration of Independence, Kosovo and Serbia commenced the dialogue on 8 March 2011.<sup>85</sup>

This is the first time that Kosovo and Serbian officials have met after Kosovo's Declaration of Independence. The dialogue still proceeds; however its first phase which lasted until October 2012, labelled as 'the technical dialogue', produced 10 Conclusion between the parties.<sup>86</sup> Whereas from 19 October 2012 and onwards, the dialogue proceeded at the Prime Ministerial level, first ones held at such level between Kosovo and Serbia, a process that was labelled as 'the political dialogue', and produced the 15 points of the "First Agreement of Principles Governing the Normalization of Relations" on 19 April 2013.<sup>87</sup> The nature of conclusions reached during the first phase of the dialogue is diverse, from freedom of movement, civil registry books, to cross border cooperation, and Kosovo's 'modified' representation in regional organisations and forums.

The main principles of the first agreement on normalisation of relations between Kosovo and Serbia brokered in the EU facilitated dialogue between the Kosovo Prime Minister, Hashim Thaçi, and Serbia's Prime Minister, Ivica Dacic, on the other hand, include more sensitive issues which relate to the northern part of Kosovo and the Community/Association of Kosovo Serb Municipalities in Kosovo. Serbia maintained its presence in this part of Kosovo since 1999, and strengthened it even further after Kosovo declared its independence as well as after Kosovo attempted to intervene and take control over the two border crossings with Serbia at the north in July 2011. The first agreement on normalisation of relations between Kosovo and Serbia is not a bilateral agreement which is subject to international law. The EU, through the gravity of its accession process attempts to play the role of the guarantor to this agreement. Kosovo is the only party to the agreement that has ratified it by 2/3 in the Parliament, and as such, the agreement is not as sustainable as it would have been should Serbia have ratified it too.

Establishment of contacts between the two parties may have certainly reduced the pressure which existed between them and it may have lowered the potential for another conflict within Kosovo or between Kosovo and Serbia. The EU accession gravity may certainly play a role in pushing Serbia eventually to practically produce changes on its stance towards Kosovo. Nonetheless, after two and a half years of contacts and negotiations, Serbia has not made a single step in making any changes to its political rhetoric regarding Kosovo nor has it made any indication that it will eventually take steps to recognize the reality on the ground - and let alone making Constitutional changes that would recognize Kosovo. After the first agreement on normalisation of relations was reached and as the implementation slowly proceeds, Serbia is expected to trigger its Article 182 of its Constitution, which stipulates that the status of Kosovo "shall be regulated by special law"<sup>88</sup> or what later became known as the "Constitutional Law" that Serbia is expected to come up with, where legal changes shall take place regarding Kosovo. It is expected however, that the Constitutional changes will reflect

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<sup>85</sup> "Kosovo and Serbia meet in Brussels for U-backed talks", accessed January 20, 2014, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-12672846>.

<sup>86</sup> KIPRED's report "The Analysis of the Implementation of the Technical Agreements between Kosovo and Serbia", [http://www.kipred.org/advCms/documents/45012\\_Implementation\\_of\\_technical\\_agreements\\_Kosovo\\_and\\_Serbia.pdf](http://www.kipred.org/advCms/documents/45012_Implementation_of_technical_agreements_Kosovo_and_Serbia.pdf).

<sup>87</sup> "First Agreement of principles governing the normalization of relations", accessed January 16, 2013, <http://friendsofkosovo.com/2013/04/19/first-agreement-of-principles-governing-the-normalization-of-relations/>.

<sup>88</sup> Article 182, Serbia's Constitution [http://www.srbija.gov.rs/cinjenice\\_o\\_srbiji/ustav\\_odredbe.php?id=225](http://www.srbija.gov.rs/cinjenice_o_srbiji/ustav_odredbe.php?id=225).

more the changes that have taken place on the ground regarding the upgraded status of the Kosovo Serbs which has been agreed between Kosovo and Serbia, rather than changes that would make Serbia appear that it is giving up Kosovo.

Lastly, the low amount of Serbia's investments in Kosovo further contributes to poor relations/contacts between the two states. The average amount of yearly investments for the period 2008-2012 from Serbia to Kosovo is around 1.4 million Euros.<sup>89</sup> However, Serbia pours a significant amount of money for the Serb municipalities in Kosovo, close to 500 million a year, 30% of Kosovo's budget".<sup>90</sup>

### **2.2.5 Kosovo's additional bilateral matters with neighbours**

Freedom of movement for Kosovo citizens to another country, and lack of barriers to movement thereof, is another fundamental aspect that contributes to the quality of bilateral relations between the states. As far as Kosovo's neighbours are concerned, all of them score high in this fundamental aspect. Albania, Macedonia, and Montenegro never applied barriers to movement for Kosovo's citizens neither before nor after the Declaration of Independence.<sup>91</sup> Macedonia and Montenegro which took around 8 months to recognize Kosovo, accepted Kosovo passports even before they recognized the states itself. Serbia lifted its barrier to entry for Kosovo citizens, three years after the Declaration of Independence, which was an outcome of the agreement on freedom of movement that was reached between the parties on 2 July 2011 as part of the 'technical dialogue'.<sup>92</sup> Nonetheless, Kosovo's neighbours do apply other barriers such as insurance premiums, which with Serbia are still the most expensive, and applies *segregatory* pricing, while applying much lower process for UNMIK licence plates than for the license plates issues by the Republic of Kosovo authorities.

### **2.2.6 Neighbours in Kosovo's international subjectivity**

Observing Kosovo's neighbouring states' role in strengthening Kosovo's international legitimacy is another fundamental aspect that contributes to the score each of these states gets in terms of their quality of bilateral relations with Kosovo. Albania is Kosovo's the only neighbouring state that has support Kosovo's case before the ICJ. Albania has presented a supportive written statement on 17 April 2009, and has provided additional supportive comments on 24 July 2009. Moreover, Albania has also used the opportunity to present an oral statement during the December 2009 public hearings at the ICJ, where its representatives stated that 'there is no rule of international law prohibiting secession', and 'it would be a severe violation of international law if intervention by third states, forcefully or otherwise, was decisive for a declaration of independence. But in Kosovo's case this was not so'.<sup>93</sup> Albania has also supported Kosovo for its membership in IMF and the World bank by voting for its membership in both institutions on 3 May 2009 and 2 June 2009 respectively.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> "Kosovo in Regional Context: Economic and Trade Relations", 59-61.

<sup>90</sup> See Policy Center, Kosovo How much does it cost?, <http://www.policycenter.info/latest.html>.

<sup>91</sup> "Visas for Kosovo citizens", accessed January 16, 2014, <http://www.mfa-ks.net/?page=1,70>.

<sup>92</sup> EU Press Statement, EU facilitated dialogue: three agreements Brussels, 2 July 2011, at [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/123383.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/123383.pdf).

<sup>93</sup> "ICJ hears further Kosovo arguments", accessed January 14, 2014, <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/icj-hears-further-kosovo-arguments>.

<sup>94</sup> KIPRED source from Kosovo Ministry of Foreign Affairs, December 2013.

Additionally, Albania is Kosovo's the only neighbouring state that invests its diplomatic resources in lobbying for Kosovo's independence and increase the number of recognition of the latter.<sup>95</sup> Due to their inability to participate in many international sports competitions and gain membership in international sports federation, Albania has opened its doors to many Kosovo sportswomen and sportsmen to represent Albania and compete under Albanian flag.<sup>96</sup> Some other aspects that contribute to excellent bilateral relations between Kosovo and Albania is the fact that overwhelming majority in both states share common identity, language, culture and history, as a result of which there is constant ongoing debate in wider circle of academia, civil society and policy makers regarding shared identity and future special prospects among both states.<sup>97</sup> Besides that there are political parties on both sides of the border that promote political integration (unification) between the two states, even the mainstream politicians support institutional integration such as in the field of economy, government policies and other fields.<sup>98</sup>

Macedonia and Montenegro on the other hand, have not submitted any written statements on 17 April 2009 deadline, neither additional comments on 24 July 2009 deadline set by the ICJ<sup>99</sup>, nor have they presented any oral statement during the December 2009 public hearings before the ICJ. They have remained silent thought this case as they did not want to compromise their relations with Serbia even further by producing a positive opinion on Kosovo, while producing a negative opinion would have been illogical as they had already recognized the new state. Also, just like Albania, Macedonia and Montenegro have both supported Kosovo's membership in the IMF and the World Bank, by voting for its membership on 3 May 2009 and 3 June 2009 respectively.<sup>100</sup>

On the other hand, besides that Macedonia has recognized Kosovo, and besides that Kosovo and Serbia have agreed on the model regarding Kosovo's representation in regional forum on 24 February 2012, Macedonia attempted to challenge Kosovo's international legitimacy when it decided not to extend its invitation to Kosovo for the 16<sup>th</sup> SEECP summit held in Ohrid on 1 and 2 June 2013, which was chaired by Macedonia.<sup>101</sup> The reasons behind Macedonia's decision not to invite Kosovo, according to Macedonia's officials, were "because there was more than a country that objected to this, although this was against the will of FYROM to invite Kosovo in the Summit."<sup>102</sup> According to President of Macedonia, Gjorge Ivanov, some of Kosovo's non-recognizing members of the region did not want Kosovo to be present, and they include one or more of the following

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<sup>95</sup> "UN, Rama: Recognize the Kosovo independence", Prime Ministry of Albania, accessed January 14, 2014, <http://www.kryeministria.al/al/newsroom/lajme/okb-rama-ndertimi-rilindjes-sfida-ime-njihni-pavaresine-e-kosoves&page=1> and <http://www.kohaditore.com/?page=1,14,160318>.

<sup>96</sup> "Kosovan Majlinda Kelmendi is going to represent Albania in Olympics", accessed January 14, 2014, <http://www.gazetatema.net/web/2012/05/25/kosovarja-majlinda-kelmendi-do-perfaqesoje-shqiperine-ne-lojerat-olimpik/>.

<sup>97</sup> "Kosovo struggles to forge an identity", accessed January 16, 2014, [http://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/17/world/europe/17kosovo.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/17/world/europe/17kosovo.html?_r=0).

<sup>98</sup> See Behgjet Pacolli statment in Albania's Assembly, <http://www.president-ksgov.net/?page=1,6,1649>

<sup>99</sup> "Accordance with International Law of the Unilateral Declaration of Indipendence by the Provisional Institutions of Slef-Government of Kosovo", International Court of Justice Press Relaease, No. 2009/17, April 21, 2009, accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.icj-cij.org/docket/files/141/15125.pdf>.

<sup>100</sup> KIPRED source from Kosovo Ministry of Foreign Affairs, December 2013.

<sup>101</sup> "Media accreditation – 16<sup>th</sup> SEECP Summit (Ohrid), and 11<sup>th</sup> Regional Forum of the "Dialogue among Civilizations", President of Macedonia, May 17, 2013, accessed December 18, 2013, <http://www.president.gov.mk/en/media-centre/press-releases/2103.html>.

<sup>102</sup> "President Ivanov cancels the proceedings of Ohrid Summit", accessed February 3, 2014, <http://www.balkan.eu.com/president-ivanov-cancels-proceedings-ohrid-summit/>.

states Serbia, B&H, Romania and Greece.<sup>103and104and105</sup> As a result of this wrath, Greece was the first state to cancel the meeting, but this was not due to Kosovo, but apparently it was a good opportunity to put Macedonia in an unkind position - taking into account their long standing dispute over the name issue.<sup>106</sup> Bulgaria immediately followed by being the second state of the region to cancel the meeting, and gave no reasons behind its decision.<sup>107</sup> A high official at Bulgaria's diplomatic service stated that Bulgaria in principle fully supports Kosovo's participation in all regional initiatives.<sup>108</sup> Two other countries, Albania<sup>109</sup> and Croatia, immediately followed by cancelling the meeting in direct protest against Macedonia's move to not invite Kosovo to the summit.<sup>110</sup> As a result, Macedonia's President was cornered and cancelled the entire Summit where the Presidents of the states of the region had been planned to meet, stating that "[u]nfortunately, the old Balkan prejudices arose and Macedonia should not pay for this. Moreover, that this should be a signal for EU to understand the reality in the region."<sup>111</sup>

The relations between Kosovo and Macedonia are also influenced by Macedonia's domestic policies towards the Albanian community in Macedonia - the implementation of the Ohrid Agreement. In the first months of 2012, Macedonia faced what can be considered the worst inter-ethnic tensions since 2001. On 28 February 2012, two Albanian men were killed by a Macedonian Police officer in Gostivar.<sup>112</sup> On 7 March 2012, five other people of Albanian ethnicity were beaten in a Skopje bus. This culminated with the retaliatory attacks and beating of Macedonian elderly and youngsters in the street by Albanians in Macedonia, as a result of which more arrests accrued and incidents continued on daily basis.<sup>113</sup> These were followed by several protests throughout the country by both Albanians and Macedonians who were chanting nationalist slogans against one another.<sup>114</sup> As a result of these actions, several people in Kosovo were of the opinion that Macedonia is not being fair to its Albanian community, and as a result, on 17 March 2013, Macedonia's Embassy to Prishtina was attacked by a molotov cocktail, impacting to a certain extent the quality of relations that both states have.

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<sup>103</sup> Serbia, Romania, BiH and Grece blocked the participation of Kosovo in the Ohrid Summit", accessed February 4, 2014, <http://www.balkan.eu.com/serbia-romania-bih-greece-blocked-participation-kosovo-ohrid-summit/>.

<sup>104</sup> "Ohrid Summit fails", accessed February 2, 2014 <http://gazetadita.al/bojkoti-anulon-samitin-e-ohrit/>

<sup>105</sup> "Kosovo absence, Ohrid Summit fails", accessed February 2, 2014, <http://www.panorama.com.al/2013/05/29/mungesat-ivanov-anulon-samitin-e-ohrit/>.

<sup>106</sup> "Macedonia scraps regional presidential summit", accessed February 3, 2014, <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/macedonia-calls-off-regional-presidential-summit>.

<sup>107</sup> "Heads of states and governments of the region absent in the Ohrid Summit", accessed February 4, 2014, <http://www.balkan.eu.com/heads-states-governments-region-absent-ohrid-summit/>.

<sup>108</sup> Bobi Bobev (Ambassador, Bulgarian Embassy in Kosovo), interview in Prishtina, October 3, 2013.

<sup>109</sup> "Albanian President explains his decision not to take place in the SEECP Summit in Ohrid", accessed January 15, 2014, <http://www.balkan.eu.com/albanian-president-explains-decision-place-seeep-summit-ohrid/>.

<sup>110</sup> "Josipovic won't attend SEECP Summit because Kosovo not invited", accessed January 15, 2014, <http://dalje.com/en-croatia/josipovic-wont-attend-seeep-summit-because-kosovo-not-invited/470088>.

<sup>111</sup> "President Ivanov cancelled the SEECP Summit and the Forum of the Dialogue among Civilizations", accessed January 16, 2014, <http://www.president.gov.mk/en/media-centre/press-releases/2142-2013-05-29-14-33-35.html>.

<sup>112</sup> KIPRED sources in Macedonia claim that the Macedonian police officer pulled the trigger after being assaulted

<sup>113</sup> "The wave of inter-ethnic incidents in Macedonia", accessed February 4, 2014, <http://balkans.aljazeera.net/makale/talas-meduetnickih-incidentata-u-makedoniji>

<sup>114</sup> Shpend Kursani and Ilir Deda, "Autonomy for the Northern part of Kosovo: Unfolding scenarios and regional consequences", KIPRED No 2012/05, July 2012, [http://www.kipred.org/advCms/documents/46046\\_Autonomy%20for%20the%20northern%20part%20of%20Kosovo%20-%20Unfolding%20scenarios%20and%20regional%20consequences.pdf](http://www.kipred.org/advCms/documents/46046_Autonomy%20for%20the%20northern%20part%20of%20Kosovo%20-%20Unfolding%20scenarios%20and%20regional%20consequences.pdf).

Considering that Serbia is the only neighbouring state that has not recognized Kosovo, it is also the only one among the neighbours, and among other countries in the region, that most strongly challenges Kosovo's international subjectivity. Besides attempting to challenge Kosovo's Declaration of Independence at the UN, Serbia continues to engage in its diplomatic endeavours especially with states that have not recognized Kosovo yet. Despite that both states are in continuous contact at Prime Ministerial level and have entered the dialogue to "help promote cooperation, achieve progress on the path to the European Union and improve the lives of the people",<sup>115</sup> Serbia has continuously been engaged in lobbying against Kosovo's membership in international organisations.<sup>116and117</sup>

Serbia has used every opportunity to boycott Kosovo's membership in international organisations and has continuously attempted to challenge its international subjectivity. Serbia is Kosovo's the only neighbouring state that has issued a negative written statement on 17 April 2009 before the ICJ; it is the only one in the entire region, even among the non-recognizers in the region, that has issued an additional negative statement supporting its cause before the ICJ, on 24 July 2009, and of course has also made a negative oral statement during the December 2009 ICJ public hearing on the legality of Kosovo's Declaration of Independence. Serbia's reservations, declarations, and objections on Kosovo's membership in the IMF, issued on 17 August 2009 were compiled such as that Serbia argued that "declaration of the Republic of Serbia with respect to the purported accession of the so-called 'Republic of Kosovo' to the Articles of Agreement of the International Monetary Fund [...] the Republic of Serbia declares that acts of signing and depositing purported instrument of accession to the Articles of Agreement of the International Monetary Fund by the representatives of the so-called 'Republic of Kosovo' are in violation of international law and in particular United Nations Security Council resolution 1244. Consequently, they are null and void and without any legal effect. The Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija is part of the Republic of Serbia currently under United Nations administration pursuant to Security Council resolution 1244 (1999)."<sup>118</sup> Therefore, Serbia boycotted the voting of Kosovo's membership in the IMF and the World Bank on 3 May 2009 and 3 June 2009 respectively.

Lastly, the EU-facilitated dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia, which Kosovo has embarked into with hopes that it would strengthen its international legitimacy by increasing the number of recognitions and membership in regional and international organisation on the one hand, and in which Serbia has embarked into with hopes to solve the final status of Kosovo through negotiations, has not been equally supported by all the neighbouring countries. So far, Albania has been one of the strongest supporters of these negotiations among Kosovo's neighbouring states. However, in these negotiations, Albania has not gone beyond providing rhetorical support, meaning that there have been no strategic consultation between Kosovo and Albania on how to approach the dialogue or how to define the red-lines. This can be observed from several aspects. First, few months before the

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<sup>115</sup> "Adopting consensus resolution, General Assembly acknowledges world court opinion on Kosovo, welcomes European Union readiness to facilitate process of dialogue", General Assembly Plenary.

<sup>116</sup> "Serbia to lobby against Pristina's membership in international organizations", accessed February 5, 2014, <http://www.balkan.eu.com/serbia-lobby-pristinas-membership-international-organizations/>.

<sup>117</sup> Serbia's, stern diplomacy reargued action over Kosovo", The Telegraph Blog, accessed December 24, 2013,

<http://blogs.telegraph.co.uk/news/charlescrawford/100164810/serbias-stern-diplomatic-rearguard-action-over-kosovo/>.

<sup>118</sup> "Agreement of the IMF", Ministry of the Foreign Affairs of Netherland, accessed January 20, 2014,

<http://www.minbuza.nl/en/key-topics/treaties/search-the-treaty-database/1945/12/006615.html?printpart=reservations>

negotiations started between the two states, Albania's high officials encouraged the dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia, but under the terms of reciprocal status as sovereign states, as Albania considered this to be a healthy approach for regional peace and stability.<sup>119</sup> Kosovo has not entered the negotiations on reciprocal status, and Albania continued to support it without providing any concrete support to make the dialogue possible on reciprocal basis.

Second, before the dialogue began on 8 March 2011, Kosovo's high officials informed Albania's high officials that the talks would never discuss Kosovo's status or its territorial integrity<sup>120</sup> and that this would be a technical dialogue only in which technical issues would be discussed in order to facilitate the life of the citizens of the Republic of Kosovo and the citizens of the Republic of Serbia, which Albania endorsed.<sup>121</sup> Kosovo did start negotiating its internal issues and rearrangement and went beyond facilitating the life of citizens on both sides of the border, and the political dialogue which culminated with the First Agreement of Principles on Normalization of Relations between Kosovo and Serbia turned out to be regarding Kosovo's internal issues only, and Albania strongly supported it without an alternative advice to Kosovo.<sup>122</sup> Albania merely continued taking Kosovo's stance and arguing that the dialogue is good for Kosovo's Euro-Atlantic integration.<sup>123and124</sup>

Macedonia and Montenegro, as Kosovo's two other neighbouring countries, on the other hand, were neither as enthusiastic as Albania was about the dialogue, nor they attempted to issue any big statements regarding the issue. Both Macedonia and Montenegro in general support solving the problems through negotiations, and it is Kosovo who has been more active in informing its neighbours in various meetings regarding the progress of the dialogue.<sup>125</sup> As far as Macedonia and Montenegro are concerned, the dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia was generally mentioned in multilateral formats as a passing issue with no specific emphasis.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> Bamir Topi's statement in meeting of regional leaders in Prevala/Prizren on 26 June 2010, <http://www.president-ks.gov.net/?page=2,6,1149>.

<sup>120</sup> President Pacolli statement on the meeting with Sali Berisha on 21 March 2011, <http://www.president-ks.gov.net/?page=1,6,1648> and President Jahjaga statement on the meeting with President Topi on 29 May, 2011, <http://www.president-ks.gov.net/?page=2,6,1808>.

<sup>121</sup> "President Atifete Jahjaga met and discussed with many heads of states participating at the Summit of Central European leaders", accessed December 20, 2013, <http://www.president-ks.gov.net/?page=2,6,1815> and <http://www.president-ks.gov.net/?page=2,6,1808>.

<sup>122</sup> Meeting between Thaci and MFA Aldo Bumci on 24 April 2013, accessed December 20, 2013, <http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/?page=2,9,3504>.

<sup>123</sup> MFA Hoxhaj statement in the meeting with MFA Aldo Bumci on 24 April 2013, accessed December 20, 2013, <http://www.mfa-ks.net/?page=1,4,1665&offset=1>.

<sup>124</sup> Jahjaga statement in the meeting with MFA Aldo Bumci on 25 April, 2013, accessed December 20, 2013, <http://www.president-ks.gov.net/?page=1,6,2848>.

<sup>125</sup> "President Jahjaga received a delegation of the Parliamentary Committee on European Integration of Macedonia, accessed December 21, 2013, <http://www.president-ks.gov.net/?page=1,6,2878>.

<sup>126</sup> "Presidents Sejdiu, Topi, Ivanov and Vujanovic held a press conference after the meeting in Vlora", accessed December 22, 2013, <http://www.president-ks.gov.net/?page=2,6,416> , <http://www.president-ks.gov.net/?page=2,6,1149>.



## 2.3 Intensity of relations with the neighbouring states

### 2.3.1 Intensity of bilateral relations - Kosovo and Albania

Among the four neighbouring states, Albania is the only one that Kosovo has *very intensive* bilateral relations with. In fact, Albania is the only state in the entire region that Kosovo has *very intensive* relations with. These intensive relations derive from the overall bilateral activity between Kosovo and Albania in terms of meetings and visits on Presidential, Prime Ministerial, and Foreign Ministerial levels, as well as economic and trade activity between the two states. Ever since the Declaration of Independence in February 2008, around 40 mutual visits and meetings have taken place on both sides of the border. Kosovo has been slightly more active in paying visits to Albania in the above mentioned levels than the other way around. Within more than five years period (between 17 February 2008 and 30 September 2013), 16 Presidential visits have taken place, of which 11 have taken place in Albania and 5 in Kosovo. Ever since she took the Office of the President on 7 April 2011, the current President of Kosovo, Atifete Jahjaga, has met with Presidents of Albania more than her predecessors taken all together, 7 times in total within around two and a half years of her service.<sup>127</sup> In addition to bilateral meetings, Presidents of Kosovo and Albania have also met in multilateral meetings in New York, at the United Nations sessions, as well as in other regional meetings and forums. In summary, Kosovo's Presidents have visited Albania twice as more as the other way around.

Kosovo's intensity of relations with the neighbouring states

	State	Points	Intensity
1	<b>Albania</b>	<b>3.75</b>	<b>Very intensive</b>
	Turkey	2.25	Intensive
3	<b>Macedonia</b>	<b>2.00</b>	<b>Moderately intensive</b>
	Croatia	2.00	Moderately intensive
	Slovenia	2.00	Moderately intensive
	Bulgaria	1.00	Moderately intensive
	Greece	1.00	Moderately intensive
8	<b>Serbia</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>Moderately intensive</b>
9	<b>Montenegro</b>	<b>0.75</b>	<b>Not active</b>
	B&H	0.50	Not active
	Romania	0.00	Not active

When it comes to governmental meetings and visits, a total of 23 meetings have taken place within more than five years period (between 17 February 2008 and 30 September 2013). Thirteen of the governmental meetings have taken place at the Prime Ministerial level and 10 other at Foreign Ministerial level. All the meetings at the Prime Ministerial level, except one have taken place between the current Prime Minister of Kosovo, Hashim Thaçi, who has been the Prime Minister ever since Kosovo declared its independence, and the former Prime Minister of Albania, Sali Berisha, who lost his office to Edi Rama in recent June 2013 general elections.<sup>128</sup> Edi Rama, the current Prime

Minister of Albania has visited Kosovo on 13 September 2013 when he first came into office.<sup>129</sup> The Prime Minister of Kosovo has visited Albania 7 times, while the Albanian prime minister have visited Kosovo 6 times; additionally, they have also met in multilateral meetings.

In contrast to Presidential and Prime Ministerial meetings where Kosovo has been more active in visiting Albania, in the case of meetings and visits at Foreign Ministerial level, Albania has been more

<sup>127</sup> See all meetings, accessed November 24, 2013, <http://www.president-ksgov.net/?page=1,6,846>, <http://www.president-ksgov.net/?page=2,6,415>, <http://www.president-ksgov.net/?page=1,6,1263>, <http://www.president-ksgov.net/?page=1,6,1516>, <http://www.president-ksgov.net/?page=1,6,1647>, <http://www.president-ksgov.net/?page=1,6,454>, <http://www.president-ksgov.net/?page=1,6,2417>, <http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/?page=2,9,3042>.

<sup>128</sup> See all meetings, accessed November 24, 2013, <http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/?page=1,9,256>, <http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/?page=1,9,3733>, <http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/?page=2,9,652>.

<sup>129</sup> "Prime Minister of Kosovo Hashim Thaçi, receives the Prime Minister of Albania Edi Rama", accessed November 24, 2013, <http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/?page=2,9,3752>.

active in visiting Kosovo. Albania's foreign ministers have visited Kosovo 6 times within more than five and half years, whereas the foreign ministers of Kosovo have visited Albania two times, and the additional to other meetings have taken place in multilateral format.<sup>130</sup>

The nature of the meetings between the high officials of Kosovo and Albania are more economic as well as political. These intensive meetings also have include topics regarding common and shared problems that both states face, more particularly, the cooperation that needs to unfold and advance in the area of fighting cross-border smuggling and organised crime, which are also among the conditions both states have to meet in order to advance towards the EU accession process.<sup>131</sup>

Besides very intensive bilateral activity in terms of visits and meetings between the two states, trade volume is another aspect that contributes to keeping very intensive relations ongoing. The average yearly trade volume within the period of 2008-2012 was around 110 million Euros, and was constantly increasing since then; 80 million in 2008 up to around 150 million in 2010 and so on.<sup>132</sup> It is clear, therefore, that very intensive bilateral relations between Kosovo and Albania are a product of both political and economic intensive engagements; although the political activity is much stronger than the economic one.

### **2.3.2 Intensity of bilateral relations - Kosovo and Macedonia**

Among the four neighbouring states, Macedonia has only *moderately intensive* bilateral relations with Kosovo. These moderately intensive relations derive from the overall bilateral activity between Kosovo and Macedonia in terms of meetings and visits on Presidential, Prime Ministerial, and Foreign Ministerial levels - which were not plausible for a neighbouring country - as well as economic and trade activity between the two states. Ever since the Declaration of Independence in February 2008, around 11 mutual visits and meetings have taken place on both sides of the border, which is only close to a quarter of mutual visits and meetings that have taken place between Kosovo and Albania. Just like the case with Albania, Kosovo officials have paid more visits to Macedonia than the other way around. This partly has to do with the fact that a number of visits have taken place between Kosovo officials and the representatives of the Albanian community in Macedonia.

Within more than five years period (between 17 February 2008 and 30 September 2013), only 3 Presidential visits have taken place, of which 2 have taken place in Macedonia and only 1 in Kosovo; however none of the Presidential visits were bilaterally official in nature only.<sup>133</sup> As one of the first Presidential meetings was going to take place in Skopje between Kosovo and Macedonia, the latter changed the character of the visit from official to unofficial one, and in response the Kosovo President, Fatmir Sejdiu, cancelled the meeting.<sup>134</sup> Most of the meetings between Kosovo and Macedonia's officials have had a multilateral, or rather trilateral character, where Albania's counterparts were also present at most of the meetings that have taken place between Kosovo and

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<sup>130</sup> See all meetings, accessed November 24, 2013, <http://www.mfa-ks.net/?page=1,4,44&offset=1>, <http://www.mfa-ks.net/?page=1,4,1483&offset=3>, <http://www.president-ksgov.net/?page=2,6,654>, and <http://www.president-ksgov.net/?page=1,6,2848>.

<sup>131</sup> "Prime Minister Thaci hosts the Republic of Albania Minister of Interior, Bujar Nishani: Our shared priorities in fighting organised crime", accessed November 25, 2014, <http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/?page=2,9,220>.

<sup>132</sup> Publications for external trade, Office of the Prime Minister, Kosovo Agency of Statistics, accessed January 20, 2014, [http://esk.rks-gov.net/publikimet/cat\\_view/14-tregtia-e-jashtme](http://esk.rks-gov.net/publikimet/cat_view/14-tregtia-e-jashtme).

<sup>133</sup> President of the Republic of Kosovo, News and Events at, <http://www.president-ksgov.net/?page=1,6>

<sup>134</sup> <http://www.president-ksgov.net/?page=2,6,685>.

Macedonia, For instance in 2009, when visiting Macedonia Kosovo's President was associated with Albania's President as well.<sup>135</sup> Also, the only visit that took place in 2010 in Kosovo at Presidential level between the two states, was of trilateral nature, because Macedonia's President was also Associated by Albania's President.<sup>136</sup>

When it comes to governmental meetings and visits, a total of only 8 meetings have taken place within more than five years period (between 17 February 2008 and 30 September 2013). Just like the Presidential visits, the Prime Ministerial visits for instance, were either unofficial or private, or multilateral in nature. There were only two visits at Prime Ministerial level, and all the two visits were paid by Kosovo's Prime Minister; the first one was an unofficial visit in 2009 where he met with Albanian political officials, and the second one was an unofficial visit to Skopje, together with Albania's Prime Minister marking the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Albania's independence, where evidently they met the Albanian political officials in Macedonia who were celebrating the event as well.<sup>137</sup> On the other hand, Macedonia's Prime Minister who had been the only one in power since the Declaration of Independence in 2008, Nikola Gruevski, has never conducted any visit to Kosovo. An official visit was planned to happen on November 2012 but it was postponed, as stated, due to an inconsistency with the cabinet of Kosovo's Prime Minister Agenda.<sup>138</sup> Gruevski, however, is known for its far right political extreme leaning, and many times has been viewed as, and accused of albanofob(ia).<sup>139</sup> For instance during a recent row of blockades between the two states, Kosovo's Deputy Prime Minister Hajredin Kuçi stated that "Gruevski is the last refuge of nationalists who have remained in the region. Even those in Belgrade have changed."<sup>140</sup> Just like with Presidential visits, it is clear that Macedonia has had more sceptical and restrained relations when it comes to promoting more intense and open relations between the two states.

The foreign ministers of both states have met six times, three in each side of the border. The last visit from Macedonia's MFA in Kosovo was conducted on 21 October 2011 and there has been no other visit since, while the Kosovo Foreign Minister last visited Macedonia on 24 June 2013.<sup>141</sup> The issues mostly discussed between the officials on both sides of the border are more or less issues that have to do with respective foreign policy priorities and objectives. As such, officials on both sides of the border emphasise good neighbourly relations and the common goal for Euro-Atlantic integration, as well as the assistance Macedonia could provide with lessons learned regarding visa liberalisation.<sup>142</sup> Meetings on multilateral format have also taken place between the parties and their respective foreign and regional policies and objectives are constantly reemphasized.

It is obvious that moderately intensive relations derive from very low political activity between the two states; nonetheless, what maintains the intensity of bilateral relations at this level are economic

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<sup>135</sup> "Sejdiu, Topi e Ivanov takohen në Ohër, diskutojnë për bashkëpunimin rajonal", at <http://www.president-ks.gov.net/?page=1.6.324>.

<sup>136</sup> "President Atifete Jahjaga was on a private visit to Macedonia, there where no official meetings or statements", accessed, January 25, 2014, <http://www.president-ks.gov.net/?page=2.6.1797>.

<sup>137</sup> See visit at <http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/?page=2.9.162> and <http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/?page=2.9.3234>

<sup>138</sup> "PM Gruevski skips the visits in Prishtina", accessed January 15, 2014, <http://www.albaniapress.com/lajme/18321/Kryeministri-Nikolla-Gruevski-anashkalon-vizitat-ne-Prishtine.html>.

<sup>139</sup> "PM Gruevski skips the visits in Prishtina", accessed January 15, 2014, <http://zhurnal.mk/content/?id=1351704903>

<sup>140</sup> Deputy PM Hajredin Kuçi statement at Info Magazine Show. Klan Kosova, September 10, 2013

<http://www.klankosova.tv/index.php/informacion/info-magazine?start=95>

<sup>141</sup> See visits at <http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/?page=2.9.2414> and <http://www.mfa-ks.net/?page=2.4.1304&offset=60>

<sup>142</sup> <http://www.mfa-ks.net/?page=2.4.451&offset=1>.

and trade relations. Macedonia is Kosovo 1<sup>st</sup> trading partner which exceeds 350 million Euros a year.<sup>143</sup>

### 2.3.3 Intensity of bilateral relations - Kosovo and Montenegro

Among the four neighbouring states, Montenegro does not have very intensive relations with Kosovo; the relations remain more or less *not active*. In fact, Kosovo enjoys more intensive relations with eight other states in the region, including Greece and Serbia as non-recognizers than with its neighbour Montenegro. The inactive relations derive from the overall bilateral inactivity between Kosovo and Montenegro in terms of meetings and visits on Presidential, Prime Ministerial, and Foreign Ministerial levels - which were not very plausible for a neighbouring country, as well as economic and trade activity between the two states. Ever since the Declaration of Independence in February 2008, only around 6 mutual visits and meetings have taken place on both sides of the border, which is almost twice as less as with Macedonia, and around 7 times as less as those with Albania. The meetings have equally taken place - 3 times on each side of the border.

Within more than five years period (between 17 February 2008 and 30 September 2013), only 2 Presidential visits have taken place, of which 1 has taken place in Montenegro and another one in Kosovo. The first meeting that took place at the Presidential level was in 2010, when President of Montenegro, Filip Vujanovic<sup>144</sup>, visited Kosovo; whereas Kosovo's President visited Montenegro in 2012 more than four and a half years after the declaration of independence.<sup>145</sup>

When it comes to governmental meetings and visits, a total of only 4 meetings have taken place within more than five years period. One of them was at the Prime Ministerial level, when the Kosovo Prime Minister visited Montenegro in July 2010<sup>146</sup> for the first and last time ever since, while there has been no official visits to Kosovo by a Montenegrin Prime Minister. Similarly, Kosovo's Foreign Minister has visited Montenegro two times, once<sup>147</sup> in June 2011<sup>148</sup> and once in January 2012.<sup>149</sup> While Montenegrin Foreign Minister has visited Kosovo only once in May 2011.<sup>150</sup>

Similarly to the issues discussed with Macedonia, the issues in the agenda between Kosovo and Montenegro relate to the common objectives for Euro Atlantic integration process as well as developing good neighbourly relations. Some open issues that are also discussed are the Border Demarcation that both Foreign Ministers at one of the meetings agreed to complete by the end of

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<sup>143</sup> "Kosovo in Regional Context: Economic and Trade Relations", KIPRED, 26-29.

<sup>144</sup> "President Sejdiu holds bilateral meetings with Presidents Ivanov, Topi and Vujanovic" accessed November 13, 2013, <http://www.president-ks.gov.net/?page=2,6,1149>.

<sup>145</sup> "Sejdiu: Kosovo and Montenegro have european perspective", accessed November 13, 2013, <http://www.president-ks.gov.net/?page=1,6,666>.

<sup>146</sup> "Prime Minister Hashim Thaçi met with the former Prime Minister of Montenegro, Milo Gjukanović, and the Prime Minister of Albania, Sali Berisha", accessed November 15, 2013, <http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/?page=2,9,2156>.

<sup>147</sup> During the first visit of Mr. Hoxhaj, there was no Kosovo flag in the meeting, and during the press declaration there was a protest when Mr. Hoxhaj was speaking in Albanian language.

<sup>148</sup> "Hoxhaj and Rocen sign three cooperation agreements, accessed November 20, 2013, <http://www.mfa-ks.net/?page=2,4,833&offset=1>.

<sup>149</sup> "Ministri Hoxhaj vizitë zyrtare në Mal të Zi", accessed November 22, 2013, <http://www.indeksonline.net/?FaqeID=2&LajmID=13540>

<sup>150</sup> "Reciprocal support between Kosovo and Montenegro for integration", accessed November 15, 2013, <http://www.mfa-ks.net/?page=2,4,782&offset=1>.

2013,<sup>151</sup> as well as the recognition of Montenegrins as a Community with all the Constitutional and equal rights with other communities in Kosovo.<sup>152</sup>

What further contributes to Kosovo's not so active relations with Montenegro are the low intensity of economic and trade relations as well. Montenegro is only the 10<sup>th</sup> trading partner of Kosovo among all the other states of the region, just above Romania.<sup>153</sup> The total average yearly trade volume in between 2008-2012 was approximately 19 million euro.<sup>154</sup> The lowest trade volume within this period was in 2010 - approximately 15 million Euros, whereas the highest trade volume was in 2012 - approximately 27 million Euros.<sup>155</sup>

#### **2.3.4 Intensity of bilateral relations/contacts - Kosovo and Serbia**

Besides that it has not recognized Kosovo and is one of the states that challenges Kosovo's existence as an independent state as well as its international legitimacy in every single step, Kosovo and Serbia have maintained *moderately intensive* relations/contacts. Serbia ranks only better than Montenegro, B&H and Romania, in terms of intensity of its relations/contacts with Kosovo, and ranks at similar levels with Greece and Bulgaria. Apart from intensive relations/contacts at multilateral level, mainly intensive government contacts in Brussels as part of the EU-facilitated dialogue, there was neither any official nor any unofficial or private contacts between the officials of Kosovo and Serbia in bilateral terms.. Overwhelming majority of visits between the parties occurred in Brussels, despite some occasional private visits of Serbia's officials in Kosovo for religious and political purposes when meeting representatives of Serb community in Kosovo.<sup>156</sup>

Within more than five years period (between 17 February 2008 and 30 September 2013), or more specifically, within 2 and a half years since contacts between the two parties have been established, around 17 meetings have taken place at either Presidential, Prime Ministerial, or Foreign Ministerial levels. Of all these meetings more than 16 have taken place between the prime ministers of both states; meetings which all took place in Brussels within only one year period (between October 2012 and September 2013). Before the dialogue started, Serbia had refused to sit in any multilateral meeting, regional or international, in which Kosovo participated. This even continued after the dialogue between the two parties started - until the agreement on Kosovo's regional representation and cooperation was reached on 24 February 2012.<sup>157</sup> The agreement, however, has shown not to always guarantee Serbia's participation, as Kosovo's presence had been disputed by Serbia on the grounds that Kosovo is not being represented with the entire footnote that they had allegedly agreed on. The inability of this agreement to guarantee parties settlement of dispute, as well as the inability of the EU to guarantee the implementation of the agreement, was best shown when Macedonia failed to invite Kosovo at the SEECP Summit held in Ohrid on 1 and 2 June 2013, allegedly due to

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<sup>151</sup> "Demarkacioni i kufirit me Malin e Zi brenda këtij viti", accessed November 20, 2013, <http://www.mfa-ks.net/?page=1,4,1802&offset=2>

<sup>152</sup> "President Jahjaga meets the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Montenegro, Rocen", accessed November 20, 2013, <http://www.president-ks.gov.net/?page=1,6,1801>.

<sup>153</sup> "Kosovo in Regional Context: Economic and Trade Relations", KIPRED.

<sup>154</sup> "Kosovo in Regional Context: Economic and Trade Relations", KIPRED, 26-29.

<sup>155</sup> Publications for external trade, Office of the Prime Minister, Kosovo Agency of Statistics, accessed January 20, 2014, [http://esk.rks-gov.net/publikimet/cat\\_view/14-tregtia-e-jashtme](http://esk.rks-gov.net/publikimet/cat_view/14-tregtia-e-jashtme).

<sup>156</sup> The EU Office in Kosovo has been contacted regarding the private visits of Serbian officials that have taken place in Kosovo, but no response was received until the time of publication of this report.

<sup>157</sup> "Serbia Leaves Regional Summit over Kosovo", Balkan Insight, May 21, 2008, <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/serbia-leaves-regional-summit-over-kosovo>.

Serbia and some other non-recognizers of the region. Kosovo's regional representation troubles as well as Serbia's continued disputes regarding Kosovo's representation as a party at regional forums and organisations were happening as the dialogue was ongoing between the prime ministers as well as at other technical levels of government.

What contributes to *moderately intensive* relations between Kosovo and Serbia, in the absence of bilateral relations on political level, is trade exchange volume. Serbia is Kosovo's second trading partner just after Macedonia. The yearly trade volume between the two states has been growing constantly, and in 2012 it has reached around 292 million Euros.<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>158</sup> "Kosovo in Regional Context: Economic and Trade Relations", KIPRED, 26-29.

### 3 KOSOVO AND THE OTHER NON-RECOGNIZERS IN THE REGION

#### 3.1 Foreign and regional policies

Kosovo's non-recognizers in the region embrace varying regional and foreign policies. There are some policy aspects that they share, but unlike Kosovo's neighbouring states, the non-recognizing states of the region have more regional and foreign policy aspects that are different from one another. The main reasons for this are two-fold. First, having different geographic location, Kosovo's non-recognizers in the region (BiH in the Western Balkans, Romania in the eastern part of the Balkans, Greece in the southern part of the Balkans, excluding Serbia which was discussed above) do not border each other, and as such their regional and foreign policies succumb to their own immediate neighbouring and regional circumstances. Second, their regional and foreign policies differ because from four non-recognizers of the region, two are EU Member States and thus lead a much different policy, and do not share the ambitions or priorities of BiH for EU integration for example, which will be discussed in this part of the study.

Each of Kosovo's non-recognizers in the region promote cooperation with their immediate neighbours. For instance, BiH promotes cooperation with its immediate neighbours, more specifically: Croatia, Serbia, and Montenegro "on the basis of common interest and principles of equality mutual respect and respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity".<sup>159</sup> BiH's the other regional policy objective is to "intensify bilateral activities towards the countries in the region with which such relations have not been established yet".<sup>160</sup> Bilateral relations between BiH and Kosovo have not been established yet, and although this would meet one of BiH's foreign policy objectives, it does not seem to materialize as BiH, through Republika Sprska, follows Serbia's lead when it comes to Kosovo.

Greece for instance, being one of the regional countries as well as among the regional non-recognizers, which at the same time is a member of EU and NATO takes a regional policy with the aim of consolidating stability and security in the region in general.<sup>161</sup> Moreover, Greece's fundamental aim for the region is the inclusion of the Balkans in European and Euro-Atlantic institutions.<sup>162</sup> Greece's aim is to achieve these goals through inclusion of the region in as many regional organisations and multilateral fora as possible.<sup>163</sup> On the other hand, Romania, besides being a regional EU and NATO Member State has other priorities compared to Greece. Romania's regional priorities focus primarily on the Black Sea region as well as the inclusion of its immediate neighbour, Moldova, in regional initiatives as well as in EU accession process.<sup>164</sup> Romania's aim is to keep its immediate neighbourhood stable and secure by assisting its eastern neighbours through the EU institutions and policies, or more specifically, it aims to do so through the European Neighbourhood and Enlargement Policies, as well as other foreign multilateral initiatives within the

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<sup>159</sup> "Basic Directions of BiH Foreign Policy".

<sup>160</sup> "Basic Directions of BiH Foreign Policy".

<sup>161</sup> "Western Balkans", Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Greece, accessed December 4, 2013, <http://www.mfa.gr/en/foreign-policy/regional-policy/western-balkans.html>.

<sup>162</sup> "Western Balkans", MFA Greece.

<sup>163</sup> "Western Balkans", MFA Greece.

<sup>164</sup> "Chapter 21 – Romania's Foreign Policy", Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania, accessed December 6, 2013, <http://www.mae.ro/en/node/2144>.

EU.<sup>165</sup> Romania also supports the European perspective of the other states in the Balkans that still remain out of the EU, including Moldova.<sup>166</sup>

As for the Kosovo non-recognizers' particular foreign policy interests, BiH for instance, maintains its intention to be part of Euro-Atlantic structures, and it focuses its foreign policy in key powers in the international system, as well as other regions and multilateral organisations that are in the interest of BiH. Its immediate foreign policy aim is to protect and fully implement that Dayton Accords - The General Peace Agreement, and thus develop bilateral relations, in particular with the "the member countries of the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board [like the] USA, Russian Federation, Great Britain, France, China other member countries of the UN Security Council, [and] member countries of the European Union."<sup>167</sup> Additionally, BiH aims to develop bilateral relations with "member countries of the Organization of Islamic Conference and with other countries which significantly contribute to reconstruction and development of BiH".<sup>168</sup>

Greece's foreign policy interests remain the security and stability in the entire Mediterranean, Balkan and Black Sea areas which, to Greece, are interrelated.<sup>169</sup> As such, being an EU Member States, Greece, attempts to use the former's institutions and policies to achieve some of its foreign policy objectives. The EU institutions and policies are of particular interest to Greece when it comes to stabilizing its neighbourhood (a European periphery) through its integration in the EU.<sup>170</sup> In terms of bilateral relations and open issues, Greece gives a particular importance to its relations with the FYROM (Macedonia), Turkey, and Cyprus, the latter two being managed through Greece's partnership with Turkey in collective defence mechanisms that NATO provides.<sup>171</sup> Similarly to Greece, Romania attempts to use and exhaust as much as possible the benefits its membership into the EU and NATO provides for achieving foreign policy goals. Romania's aims are to strengthen its bilateral relations with all the EU Member States, but more particularly with the Central European countries such as "Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, the Baltic States, and Bulgaria".<sup>172</sup> Romania, just like the other Western Balkans countries gives an important room to the United States in its foreign policy agenda, and its aim is to maintain a strategic partnership with the USA, and establish as strong economic and investments ties as possible.<sup>173</sup> Lastly, Romania's foreign policy priorities go across the oceans over to emerging states such as China, India, Brazil, as well as other well established economic powers such as Japan and South Korea.<sup>174</sup>

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<sup>165</sup> "Chapter 21 – Romania's Foreign Policy", MFA Romania.

<sup>166</sup> "Chapter 21 – Romania's Foreign Policy", MFA Romania.

<sup>167</sup> "Basic Directions of BiH Foreign Policy".

<sup>168</sup> "Basic Directions of BiH Foreign Policy".

<sup>169</sup> "The Foreign Policy of Greece", Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Greece, accessed December 17, 2013, [http://video.minpress.gr/wwwminpress/aboutgreece/aboutgreece\\_foreign\\_policy.pdf](http://video.minpress.gr/wwwminpress/aboutgreece/aboutgreece_foreign_policy.pdf).

<sup>170</sup> "The Foreign Policy of Greece" MFA Greece.

<sup>171</sup> "The Foreign Policy of Greece" MFA Greece.

<sup>172</sup> "Chapter 21 – Romania's Foreign Policy", MFA Romania.

<sup>173</sup> "Chapter 21 – Romania's Foreign Policy", MFA Romania.

<sup>174</sup> "Chapter 21 – Romania's Foreign Policy", MFA Romania.



### 3.2 Quality of relations with the other non-recognizers in the region

#### 3.2.1 Bilateral relations/contacts with BiH

BiH is one of the four states in the region that does not recognize Kosovo as an independent state. As such, BiH and Kosovo do not have any established bilateral relations, and the quality of relations overall remains *poor*. Kosovo's poor relations with BiH derive from the overall score BiH gets in fundamental aspects of its relations/contacts with Kosovo. As a result of non-recognition, there is no diplomatic relations between the two states and as such, there is neither a diplomatic presence, nor a representation at any level in either of the states, making BiH the only non-recognizer in the region that does not have any diplomatic presence in Kosovo.<sup>175</sup> In general, BiH is among the non-recognizing countries with whom Kosovo maintains the poorest relations with, which, as a result, puts BiH at the bottom of the list of states in the entire region in terms of its quality of relations/contacts with Kosovo.

BiH is the only state among the non-recognizers in the region that defines its relations to Kosovo almost entirely through Serbia's lenses. However, not all political actors in BiH maintain the same stance towards Kosovo. The only blocking representative at the Presidency is the Serb representative, while the Bosniak and Croat representatives have maintained their supportive stance towards Kosovo's independence, with the Croat representative stating that he "supports the integrity and sovereignty of Croatia and Serbia without Kosovo", which has raised a lot of eyebrows and has ignited a lot of reactions among the Serb representatives.<sup>176</sup> Given that its foreign policy decision making are taken by the Presidency which consists of the representatives of the three constituent peoples of BiH (Bosniak, Serb, and Croat), and requires the consent of all three representatives, the recognition or at least the relaxation of relations between Kosovo and BiH does not happen because of the Serb representatives' veto in the Presidency of BiH. The position of the Serb representatives at the Presidency towards the final status of Kosovo is not instigated from any strategic interest of BiH as a whole, but this position is in line with Serbia's interest.<sup>177</sup> So the non-recognition of Kosovo on the part of BiH is more a result of ethno-politics in the region, rather than any other solid interest for the state.

Kosovo's quality of relations with the the non-recognizing states in the region

	State	Points	Quality
	Turkey	4.00	Excellent
	Albania	3.88	Excellent
	Slovenia	3.25	Very Good
	Macedonia	3.13	Very Good
	Croatia	2.63	Good
	Bulgaria	2.75	Good
	Montenegro	1.88	Fair
8	<b>Serbia</b>	0.75	Poor
9	<b>Greece</b>	0.25	Poor
10	<b>Romania</b>	0.13	Poor
11	<b>B&amp;H</b>	0.00	Poor

In line with Serbia's policy towards Kosovo, the BiH Serb representatives at the level of the Presidency as well as those in Republika Srpska would continuously draw parallels between Kosovo's independence and the "alterable" status of RS. For the BiH Serbs the independence of Kosovo is associated with the potential for greater autonomy for the RS in exchange, and as such, the BiH

<sup>175</sup> Romania, Greece, maintain Liaison Offices in Prishtina, while Serbia maintains a Liaison Officer in Prishtina located in the EU Offices in Kosovo.

<sup>176</sup> "Kosovo Calling", International Conference to Launch Position Papers on Kosovo's Relation with EU and Regional Non-Recognising Countries, 157, <http://kfos.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Kosovo-Calling-ENG.pdf>

<sup>177</sup> "Kosovo Calling", 157-158.

Serbs keep their veto powers and the ability to decide on foreign policy issues as a trump card for the bettering of their own status should any moves take place towards recognizing Kosovo.<sup>178</sup> Even, former Serbia's Prime Minister, Vojislav Kostunica, has stated that anything that is given to Kosovo should be compensated to RS.<sup>179</sup> This becomes more evident with the fact that BiH does not entirely change its stance towards Kosovo each time Serbia changes it.; for instance, there are several agreements reached between Kosovo and Serbia, among which Serbia recognizes Kosovo's travel documents, various other documents, university diplomas, in which BiH has not followed suit.<sup>180</sup> The EU does, however, attempt to influence BiH to change its stance towards Kosovo, short of recognition, or at least act in line with the agreements Serbia has reached with Kosovo, but to no avail. The reasons for this are two-fold. First, the EU has not managed to convince its own non-recognizing Member States to act in line with the agreements Serbia has reached with Kosovo, (i.e. Romania, Cyprus, Spain, Slovakia, and Greece - their relations with Kosovo in terms of quality are everything but at the level of quality of relations that Serbia has with Kosovo). Second, the EU has failed to influence BiH political elite to take even "softer" decisions as part of its conditionality led policy to reform internally in exchange for benefits in the accession process; thus, the chances for the EU to be a credible party to convince BiH to change its stance even slightly towards Kosovo remain dim.

BiH's policy on the movement of the Republic of Kosovo citizens is what further contributes to the poor quality of relations between the two states. Upon the Declaration of Independence and the adoption of the Republic of Kosovo new passports, the BiH authorities have banned the movement for every Kosovo citizen bearing the new Kosovo passports. The non-recognition of passports was linked with the non-recognition of Kosovo as a state.<sup>181</sup> It took the mounting pressure of the EU on the BiH Foreign Ministry, for the latter to consider, and later adopt, more than two years after the Declaration of Independence, a decision that would allow the entry of the Kosovo citizens with new passports, only when these citizens participate in "certain regional initiatives, for instance meetings of Regional Cooperation Council, which is based in Sarajevo".<sup>182</sup> A decision taken by the BiH authorities on 8 May 2010, allowed the MFA to issue visas for Kosovo citizens bearing the new passports only on special occasions which are "of special interest for BiH"; and whereby all the applications need to be approved by the Council of Ministers of BiH.<sup>183</sup> Nonetheless, it was not until 8 March 2012 (more than 8 months after Kosovo and Serbia had agreed on freedom of movement of people between the two states), when the Council of Ministers of BiH decided to issue visas for Kosovo citizens through its Embassies in the region, this time, without the previous condition that the application had to meet in regards to "special interest for BiH".<sup>184</sup> Kosovo, on the other hand, does not apply any restrictions for BiH citizens to enter Kosovo.<sup>185</sup>

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<sup>178</sup> "Kosovo Calling", 155.

<sup>179</sup> "Kosovo Calling", 159.

<sup>180</sup> "Kosovo Calling", 155.

<sup>181</sup> "Kosovo Calling" 155-161.

<sup>182</sup> "Kosovo Calling", 161.

<sup>183</sup> "Kosovo Calling", 161.

<sup>184</sup> "Bosnja nis lëshimin e vizave për Kosovarët", accessed January 28, 2014, <http://gazetajnk.com/?cid=1,1018,1583>.

<sup>185</sup> "Who doesn't need visa?", MFA Kosovo, accessed January 14, 2014, <http://www.mfa-ks.net/?page=2,87>.

Lastly, compared to the other non-recognizers which have at least established some sort of contact with Kosovo and, as a result, have established cooperation in various fields through the memorandum of understandings, nothing like this has ever happened with BiH.<sup>186and187</sup>

### 3.2.2 *Bilateral relations/contacts with GREECE*

Greece is another one of the four states in the region that does not recognize Kosovo as an independent state. As such, Greece and Kosovo do not have any established bilateral relations, and the quality of relations overall remains *poor*. Kosovo's poor relations with Greece derive from the overall score Greece gets in fundamental aspects of its relations/contacts with Kosovo. Although poor, the overall quality of relations between Kosovo and Greece are better than Kosovo's relations with other two non-recognizers, BiH and Romania more specifically. Unlike BiH, Greece maintains a diplomatic presence through its Liaison Office, and is represented at the level of a Liaison Officer. Kosovo, on the other hand, does not have any diplomatic presence in Greece, which is surprising because Greece did not prevent by any means Kosovo's potential presence in Athens through a Liaison Office; Kosovo's lack of diplomatic presence in Greece is more because of Kosovo's decision not to establish such an office yet. Greek authorities have clearly stated that, if asked, they will grant accreditation to a Kosovar diplomatic representation, not as an Embassy, but as a Liaison Office<sup>188</sup>

Unlike the case with BiH, Greece's relations and position towards Kosovo does not entirely depend on and are not established through Serbia's lenses. Greece's official position on Kosovo is established primarily in accordance to its foreign policy agenda for the region, which is the stability of the wider region.<sup>189</sup> Accordingly, Greece does not hold a strict and isolationist policy towards Kosovo, and as such, it attempts to maintain a fair balance between Serbia and Kosovo, which Greece believes contributes to regional stability.<sup>190</sup> Maintaining a balance between Prishtina and Belgrade, is important to Greece because of its ambitions to be an important regional actor. In order to maintain this balance, Greece has more or less kept its policy towards Kosovo and Serbia in line with other major international actor, not in terms of Kosovo's status, but in terms of what Greece believes to contribute to regional stability - which is the EU facilitated dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia.<sup>191</sup> Greece's officials have already declared that they "fully support the dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina, to be facilitated by the EU, in accordance with the UN General Assembly decision of 9 September 2010, which was taken following a relevant Advisory Opinion - issued 22 July 2010 - from international court of justice in the Hague"<sup>192</sup>

Given that Greece's primary concern is regional stability, the dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia has relaxed Greece's any potential urgency to recognize Kosovo, which Kosovo officials had been using as an argument to collect as many recognitions as possible. The dialogue between Kosovo and

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<sup>186</sup> "Memorandum of understanding between the Kosovo accreditation directorate and Romanian accreditation association", accessed January 8, 2014, <http://www.mti-ks.org/en-us/Ministry-Trade-and-Industry-activities/Memorandum-of-Understanding-between-the-Kosovo-Accreditation-Directorate-and-Romanian-Accreditation-Association-2612-2612>.

<sup>187</sup> "Cooperation with Romania starts", accessed January 8, 2014, <http://grid.al/read/news/155905558/2473996/nis-bashkepunimi-me-rumanine>.

<sup>188</sup> "Kosovo Calling", 103.

<sup>189</sup> "Kosovo Calling", 112.

<sup>190</sup> "Kosovo Calling", 105.

<sup>191</sup> "Kosovo Calling", 105.

<sup>192</sup> "Kosovo Calling", 113.

Serbia, has relaxed Greece's regional policy, because the dialogue between Prishtina and Belgrade is in line with Greece's official position on Kosovo, which is that of non-recognition, and that such issues, i.e. problems between Kosovo and Serbia "need to be resolved through diplomacy and consensus".<sup>193</sup> Greece's concern with regional stability is also reflected in its policy not only towards, but also in Kosovo. It's official mission in Kosovo is to build an environment of stability with respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, while contributing to the improvement of economic relations, protection of minorities, and respect for cultural and religious heritage which are high priorities, without changing the political decision as a non-recognizer state toward Kosovo.<sup>194</sup>

Overall, Greece has gradually and smoothly established its presence and activities in Kosovo. Greece's diplomatic presence in Kosovo is inherited from its previous presence in Prishtina which was called the Hellenic Humanitarian Assistance Office (HHAO), which was established in late 90s during the war in Kosovo.<sup>195</sup> When UNMIK was established in Kosovo in the aftermath, the HHAO was transformed into a Liaison Office which was placed under the jurisdiction of Greece's Embassy in Belgrade. Greece's Liaison Office in Kosovo reported directly to Greece's Embassy in Belgrade until 2005, when they decided to be 'reported' (another term for accreditation) to UNMIK, which is a setting that the other non-recognizers present in Kosovo still maintain.

In line with its non-recognizing but also non-isolationist and inclusive policy for Kosovo, Greece's presence in Kosovo has been active. Considering that Greece, together with the EU consider the protection of the cultural and religious heritage of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Kosovo a main priority<sup>196</sup>, Greece's Liaison Officer in Prishtina, Dimitris Moschopoulos, has taken the duty to perform as the EU Mediator for issues concerning the cultural heritage.<sup>197</sup> Additionally, Greece's presence in Kosovo is not limited to diplomatic presence only; Greece also maintains a total of 118 troops in KFOR,<sup>198</sup> and a total of 37 troops in EULEX.

Additional factors that contribute to poor relations between Kosovo and Greece, is the limited freedom of movement applied to Kosovo citizens through the application of visas, just like the other Members of the European Union and the Schengen zone.<sup>199</sup> On the other hand, Kosovo has never applied restriction to movement to Greece's citizens.<sup>200</sup> Also, there are no agreement or any memorandums signed between the two states and the investments of Greece in Kosovo which average around 1.3 milion Euros a year between 2008-2012, are quite marginal compared to other states in the region with whom Kosovo enjoys better relations.<sup>201</sup>

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<sup>193</sup> "Kosovo Calling", 105.

<sup>194</sup> See Hellenic Republic Liaison Office in Pristina at, <http://www.mfa.gr/missionsabroad/en/pristina-en/>.

<sup>195</sup> "Kosovo Calling".

<sup>196</sup> "Greece stance – Kosovo", accessed January 14, 2014, <http://www.mfa.gr/en/blog/greece-bilateral-relations/kosovo/>.

<sup>197</sup> "Political relations", Greece MFA, accessed January 14, 2014, <http://www.mfa.gr/missionsabroad/en/pristina-en/bilateral-relations/political-relations.html>.

<sup>198</sup> "Key facts and figures", KFOR , November 30, 2012, accessed January 21, 2014, [http://www.nato.int/kfor/structur/nations/placemat/kfor\\_placemat.pdf](http://www.nato.int/kfor/structur/nations/placemat/kfor_placemat.pdf).

<sup>199</sup> "Visas for Kosovo citizens", MFA Kosovo, accessed November 20, 2013, <http://www.mfa-ks.net/?page=1,70>.

<sup>200</sup> "Who doesn't need visa", MFA Kosovo, accessed November 20, 2013, <http://www.mfa-ks.net/?page=2,157>.

<sup>201</sup> "Direct investments in Kosovo", Central Bank of Kosovo, accessed January 23, 2014,

[https://docs.google.com/viewer?url=http%3A%2Fwww.bqk-kos.org%2Frepository%2Fdocs%2Ftime\\_series%2F34%2520Foreign%2520direct%2520investments%2520%2520by%2520country.xls](https://docs.google.com/viewer?url=http%3A%2Fwww.bqk-kos.org%2Frepository%2Fdocs%2Ftime_series%2F34%2520Foreign%2520direct%2520investments%2520%2520by%2520country.xls).

### 3.2.3 *Bilateral relations/contacts with ROMANIA*

Romania is another one of the four states in the region that does not recognize Kosovo as an independent state. As such, Romania and Kosovo do not have any established bilateral relations, and the quality of relations overall remains *poor*. Kosovo's poor relations with Romania derive from the overall score Romania gets in fundamental aspects of its relations/contacts with Kosovo. Although poor, the overall quality of relations between Kosovo and Romania are already slightly better than Kosovo's relations with BiH. Unlike BiH, for instance, and just like Greece, Romania maintains a diplomatic presence through its Liaison Office, and is represented at the level of a Liaison Officer. Kosovo, on the other hand, does not have any diplomatic presence in Romania, and unlike Greece, there are no instances in which Romania has offered Kosovo to open a Liaison Office. Unlike Greece, however, Romania has not inherited the Liaison Office from Romania's previous presence in Kosovo, but it established it under the UN mandate in Kosovo.<sup>202</sup>

Several reasons could be mentioned behind Romania's current decision to side with Serbia in the case of Kosovo's Declaration of Independence and its current negative stance towards Kosovo's recognition. First is the traditional and historical ties with Serbia. Romanians consider to have a common history with Serbia in the context of fighting the Ottoman Empire together and guard the region against further occupation from the Ottomans.<sup>203</sup> Second, is the shared Orthodox religion, which is important in Romanian context.<sup>204</sup> Also, Romanian officials already have adopted "guilty feelings" in their relations to Serbia because, when NATO was planning to bomb Serbia in 1999, Romania has followed strictly their state interest, which was the potential membership that key NATO allies were ready to offer to Romania, should the latter provide logistical and political support as well as allow its airspace to be used during the bombings, which, at the time, Romania succumbed to.<sup>205</sup> Accordingly, Romania did not want to give another blow to Serbia, as their traditional partner, by recognizing Kosovo. This remorseful feeling follow Romania's relations with Serbia further, because Romania is a staunch supporter for Serbia's membership into the European Union, because Romania considers Serbia to be the key state for regional stability.<sup>206</sup>

Another reason that Romania considers to be important behind its stance on Kosovo is the issue of Transnistria, a Moldovan territory which its authorities maintain limited sovereignty because of the Russian influence; as well as because of Transylvania, a Hungarian majority region in Romania, which in both cases Romania fears Kosovo to serve as a precedent to their potential secession.<sup>207</sup> For instance, Romania's President stated that he is against Kosovo's independence in order to protect Romania from the precedence such recognition would create for Transnistria<sup>208</sup> This has not been one of the reasons that Romania has used before, but as nationalist feelings come into play, and as Hungarian minority have repeatedly put forward claims for more autonomy, it has put Romania in a difficult position.<sup>209</sup>

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<sup>202</sup> "Kosovo Calling", 51-91.

<sup>203</sup> "Kosovo Calling", 51-91.

<sup>204</sup> "Kosovo Calling", 51-91.

<sup>205</sup> "Kosovo Calling", 51-91.

<sup>206</sup> "Kosovo Calling", 51-91.

<sup>207</sup> "Kosovo Calling", 51-91.

<sup>208</sup> "President Basescu says Romania not to recognize Kosovo independence", accessed January 20, 2014, <http://m.hotnews.ro/stire/2390491>

<sup>209</sup> "Kosovo Calling", 62.

What is particular about Romania's relations with Kosovo is that, although the quality of relations between the two states are poor, and worse than those between Kosovo and Greece and even worse those between Kosovo and Serbia as non-recognizers, the political elite in Romania are divided on the status of Kosovo. On the one hand, President of Romania, Traian Băsescu, is against Kosovo's recognition and more cautious in this regard.<sup>210</sup> Actually, President Băsescu, who was re-elected in 2009 and serves until 2014, is one of the few and the only high level official whose consent is needed to change the stance on Kosovo. He has presented his fierce position on Kosovo several times. On 2 July 2008, five months after Kosovo declared its independence, in an interview after NATO's Summit, President Băsescu, stated that Romania has a clear position to not recognize Kosovo and that "this will be our position on a very long term".<sup>211</sup> Also, on 1 September 2010, few months after ICJ delivered its opinion on the legality of Kosovo's independence, at an annual reunion of Romanian Ambassadors, President Băsescu, stated that Romania will not recognize Kosovo and that parties should solve disputes through negotiations.<sup>212</sup> Even later on, in his visit to Belgrade, on 1 November 2011, President Băsescu reiterated that "at this point there is not a single condition under which Romania would recognize Kosovo"<sup>213</sup> The decision of the President in foreign policy matters, such as the recognition of Kosovo, is paramount according to Romania's Constitution which gives the President, on behalf of Romania to "conclude international treaties negotiated by the Government, and then submit them to the Parliament for ratification, within a reasonable time limit."<sup>214</sup> So, the consent of the President is the first filter, which the issue of Kosovo's recognition need to pass, before it gets to the legislative branch to approve. it.

On the other hand, the newly elected Prime Minister, Victor Ponta, who is officially supposed to serve until 2016, is one of the first high level Romania's officials that openly and strongly advocates for Kosovo's independence. Prime Minister Ponta's position on Kosovo has to do with a more pragmatic policy he plans to lead in the EU and in the region. Prime Minister Ponta wants to act in accordance with the reality on the ground and thus attempts to align Romania's foreign policy with its majority European and Euro-Atlantic partners that have already recognized Kosovo. On 4 June 2013, less than a year since he took the Office of the Prime Minister, Mr. Ponta stated that there needs to be an institutional coordination, primarily between the Parliament, the Government, and the President in order to create a final position on Kosovo, which is basically to recognize it.<sup>215</sup> Even more recently, on 13 October 2013, in his meeting with the US Vice President, Joe Biden, Prime Minister Ponta, assured Mr Biden that Romania's position on Kosovo may change in 2015.<sup>216</sup> Prime Minister Ponta did not allude to any specific reason on why exactly 2015 would be the year for Romania to change the position, but it may have to do with the expiration of current President's

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<sup>210</sup> "Romania very close to recognise Kosovo", accessed January 20, 2014, <http://www.kosovo-news.com/2013/06/romania-very-close-to-recognize-kosovo/>.

<sup>211</sup> See video interview with Traian Basescu, President of Romania, accessed January 12, 2014, <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2008/s080630b.html>.

<sup>212</sup> "Basescu: Romania will not recognize Kosovo as an independent state", accessed January 12, 2014, <http://www.kosovocompromise.com/cms/item/topic/en.html?view=story&id=3006&sectionId=1>.

<sup>213</sup> "Basescu in Belgrade: No way Romania can recognize Kosovo", accessed January 12, 2014, [http://www.novinite.com/view\\_news.php?id=133553](http://www.novinite.com/view_news.php?id=133553).

<sup>214</sup> Ibid.

<sup>215</sup> "Romania very close to recognizing Kosovo", accessed January 13, 2014, <http://www.kosovo-news.com/2013/06/romania-very-close-to-recognize-kosovo/>.

<sup>216</sup> "Romania could recognize Kosovo in 2015", accessed January 13, 2014, [http://www.b92.net/eng/news/region.php?yyyy=2013&mm=10&dd=23&nav\\_id=88092](http://www.b92.net/eng/news/region.php?yyyy=2013&mm=10&dd=23&nav_id=88092).

mandate and the potential for him to be unable to be re-elected once again. Romania's foreign minister, Titus Korlancean, has also indicated that Romania should watch closely the outcomes of the EU-facilitated dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia and should respond according to the reality created on the ground as a result.<sup>217</sup>

Romania's stance towards Kosovo, however, cannot be viewed only as a matter of Romania's principles in respecting international law and its neighbour Serbia, as Romania is not a single actor in the region, and, as it came to understand, cannot ignore regional and international circumstances surrounding its interests and the interests of its allies. Romania wants to continuously align its regional and foreign policies to its allies in NATO and the majority of the European Member States; this was more evident when President Băsescu's decided to join Serbia in boycotting the Warsaw Summit of Central and Southeast European Presidents in May 2011 where President of the US, Barack Obama was planned to take place.<sup>218</sup> President Băsescu's decision to not participate was strictly related to the fact that Poland had decided to invite Kosovo's President, Atifete Jahjaga, in this summit as well. President Băsescu's move was not welcomed domestically even by those that do not support Kosovo's recognition under the pretext that with this Romania is putting its actions against its main allies, such as the US and the key EU Member States, for a lesser relevant issue that of the participation of Kosovo in the summit.

Due to the lack of diplomatic relations, Kosovo and Romania have no bilateral agreements. However, the cooperation in some fields has been established through the signing of some memorandums, but this has been between various institutions in respective states. For instance, Directorate of Accreditation of Kosovo DAK has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with RENAR - the Romanian Accreditation Association.<sup>219</sup> Another MoU has been signed in the area of economic development in Bucharest.<sup>220</sup> Additional factors that contribute to poor relations between Kosovo and Romania, just like with Greece and other EU Member States, is the limited freedom of movement applied to Kosovo citizens through the application of visas, just like the other Members of the European Union and the Schengen zone. On the other hand, Kosovo has never applied restriction to movement to Romania's citizens. Although, there has been a slight improvement in recent years since the Declaration of Independence, when Romania decided to actually recognize Kosovo passports and allow Kosovo citizens to travel with Schengen visas, which was not the case before.

Additionally, Romania's presence in Kosovo is not limited to diplomatic presence only; Romania also maintains a total of 59 troops in KFOR<sup>221</sup> and a total of 37 troops in EULEX.<sup>222</sup> It is worth noting in this regard that Romania has maintained a larger presence until recently, though it decided

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<sup>217</sup> "Romania toward recognizing Kosovo", accessed 13, 2014, <http://www.botasot.info/kosova/213592/rumania-drejt-njohjes-se-kosoves/>.

<sup>218</sup> "Warsaw summit faces boycott", accessed December 11, 2013, <http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/434af2ca-8705-11e0-92df-00144feabdc0.html>.

<sup>219</sup> "Memorandum of Understanding between the Kosovo Accreditation Directorate and Romanian Accreditation Association", accessed January 13, 2014, <http://www.mti-ks.org/en-us/Ministry-Trade-and-Industry-activities/Memorandum-of-Understanding-between-the-Kosovo-Accreditation-Directorate-and-Romanian-Accreditation-Association-2612-2612>.

<sup>220</sup> "Cooperation with Romania starts", accessed January 14, 2014, <http://grid.al/read/news/155905558/2473996/nis-bashkepunimi-me-rumanine>.

<sup>221</sup> <sup>221</sup> "Key facts and figures", KFOR.

<sup>222</sup> KIPRED Email communication with EULEX spokesperson in July, 2013.

to withdraw most of its troops, especially those that have been part of EULEX. When EULEX became fully operational in December 2010, 60 Romanian police officers and 115 gendarmes changed their hat from UNMIK to EULEX."<sup>223</sup> Romanian presence in security mechanisms in Kosovo has not been welcomed in Kosovo, as Romanian police officers had suffered a blow when its police officers, under UNMIK mandate, killed two Kosovo citizens of Albanian ethnicity in protests organized by the Self-Determination Movement (Lëvizja Vetëvendosje!).<sup>224</sup> Accordingly, there have also been protests in Prishtina when Romanian Gendarmerie Colonel Marian Petre was appointed as head of the EULEX Special Police Department in 2011<sup>225</sup>

### *3.2.4 Regional non-recognizers in Kosovo's international subjectivity*

Support and opposition of BiH to Kosovo's international legitimacy is a highly dependent factor on the political elite of BiH, or more specifically on the political representatives of the constituent peoples of BiH. Just like the case with the support for and opposition to Kosovo's recognition, the political elite in BiH are divided on the issue of Kosovo's representation in international fora. BiH did not submit any official opinion when Kosovo's case came before the ICJ, because, evidently, the three representatives of the BiH Presidency could not agree neither for support nor for opposition to legality of Kosovo's Declaration of Independence. As a result, BiH voted neither for nor against Serbia's UNGA resolution of 8 October 2008 for submitting Kosovo's case to the ICJ; BiH decided to boycott the session.<sup>226</sup> As a result, BiH did not submit any written declaration (in support or in opposition) to the legality of Kosovo's Declaration of Independence before the ICJ before none of its deadlines of 17 April 2009 and that of 24 July 2009 respectively.<sup>227</sup> BiH also did not make an oral statement during the December 2009 hearings held before the ICJ. As for Kosovo's membership in the IMF, on 3 May 2009, BiH neither voted for nor against the former's membership in this organisation, but it abstained.<sup>228</sup> Also, on 3 June 2009, BiH neither voted for nor against Kosovo's membership in the World Bank, but they boycotted the meeting.<sup>229</sup>

When it comes to Kosovo's representation in regional and international organisations, many times BiH officials have openly confronted each other, which highlighted the lack of internal consensus on this matter.<sup>230</sup> For instance, when there are Croat or Bosniak representatives of BiH in a regional or international forum, they would neither reject nor condition their participation with the presence or absence for that matter of Kosovo officials in those occasions. In cases when Serb representatives of BiH are present at a multilateral regional or international meeting, they would condition their presence, which means BiH's presence, with Kosovo's representatives leaving the meetings. The Serb representatives of BiH would also attempt to advocate for more autonomy of RS, by conditioning Kosovo's participation with the participation of RS representatives in addition to BiH, claiming that Kosovo is to Serbia just like RS is to BiH.<sup>231</sup> Therefore, BiH's support and opposition to recognition and to Kosovo's membership and participation to regional and international fora is

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<sup>223</sup> "Kosovo Calling", 56.

<sup>224</sup> "Kosovo Calling", 56.

<sup>225</sup> "Kosovo Calling", 57.

<sup>226</sup> Internal document from MFA.

<sup>227</sup> Internal document from MFA.

<sup>228</sup> Internal document from MFA.

<sup>229</sup> Internal document from MFA.

<sup>230</sup> "Kosovo Calling", 153-166.

<sup>231</sup> "Kosovo Calling", 153-166.



affected by the internal divisions of the representatives of constituent peoples of BiH that are themselves divided on the matter.

Greece did challenge Kosovo's international legitimacy in various occasions. In the case of Serbia's resolution of 8 October 2008 at the UNGA which called for submission of the Kosovo's case before the ICJ, Greece decided to support Serbia's initiative, and voted for the resolution.<sup>232</sup> However, just like BiH, and even Montenegro and Macedonia, Greece did not submit any written declaration or opinion supporting or opposing Kosovo's case before the ICJ in none of its 19 April 2009 and 24 July 2009 deadline.<sup>233</sup> Greece also has not presented any oral statement during the December 2009 public hearings before the ICJ. Nonetheless, Greece's Foreign Minister at the time, with the endorsement of its European partners decided to visit both Prishtina and Belgrade in order to convince the parties to solve the issues on the negotiating table, which, in general, is in line with Greece's policy for the region.<sup>234</sup> Unlike BiH who abstained in Kosovo's membership to the IMF and boycotted the voting of Kosovo's membership to the World Bank, Greece was present and voted against in both cases, challenging, but not preventing Kosovo's membership in these two international organisations.<sup>235</sup> In line with its non-isolationist regional and foreign policy, regardless of its stance on Kosovo, Greece has not been a staunch lobbyist against Kosovo's independence, like for instance Spain and Cyprus have, and as such it has remained neutral in this regard. Also, there are not many cases, if any at all, that Greece has objected communication with Kosovo representatives in international and regional forums and other multilateral settings.

After Serbia, Romania is the staunchest challenger of Kosovo's international legitimacy among all the non-recognizers of the region, just after Serbia. Unlike the case with BiH and Greece which have upheld their challenge against Kosovo's international legitimacy because of their internal political constellations or because of their regional and foreign policy priorities, Romania has tried to challenge Kosovo's international legitimacy in any case it could. For instance, in the case of Serbia's resolution of 8 October 2008 at the UNGA which called for submission of Kosovo's case before the ICJ, Romania, just like Greece, decided to support Serbia's initiative, and voted for the resolution.<sup>236</sup> However, unlike Greece, Romania did submit a written statement supporting Serbia's and opposing Kosovo's case before the ICJ before its first deadline to do so on 19 April 2009, while it did not submit any additional statements or opinion in ICJ's second deadline on 24 July 2009.<sup>237</sup> Romania also used the opportunity to present its oral statement during the December 2009 ICJ's public hearing on the case, where it stated that "Serbia did violate the basic human rights of the population in Kosovo during the last decade of the previous century; however, at the time of the Declaration of Independence, Belgrade did not violate the rights of Kosovo's population".<sup>238</sup> Also, it further argued that "Serbia in February 2008 is a completely different country when compared to 1999, and a decision on declaration of independence cannot be based on the circumstances of 10 years ago";<sup>239</sup> and that "Kosovo had a specific status in SFR Yugoslavia, but it does not justify the secession, since

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<sup>232</sup> Internal document from MFA.

<sup>233</sup> Internal document from MFA.

<sup>234</sup> "Kosovo Calling", 153-166.

<sup>235</sup> Internal document from MFA.

<sup>236</sup> Internal document from MFA.

<sup>237</sup> Internal document from MFA.

<sup>238</sup> "Hague: Countinuing the debate on Kosovo", accessed January 20, 2014,

[http://www.b92.net/info/vesti/index.php?yyyy=2009&mm=12&dd=10&nav\\_category=640&nav\\_id=397469](http://www.b92.net/info/vesti/index.php?yyyy=2009&mm=12&dd=10&nav_category=640&nav_id=397469).

<sup>239</sup> Ibid.

at the time of the secession of Kosovo, SFR Yugoslavia did not exist for 16 years. The disintegration of SFRY ended in 1992, and Kosovo has since been an integral part of Serbia, and not an entity with the right to self-determination that would justify secession"<sup>240</sup>.

Additionally, just like Greece, Romania voted against Kosovo's membership in the IMF on 3 May 2009, as well as against Kosovo's membership in the World Bank on 3 June 2009, thus challenging, but not preventing Kosovo to become a member of these two international organisations.<sup>241</sup> As a result, Kosovo's membership into these two international bodies was followed by an additional statement by Romania, which reiterated that "it does not recognize the 'Republic of Kosovo' as a State. The admission of the 'Republic of Kosovo' to the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank and the membership of this entity in these bodies, alongside Romania, are without prejudice to the position of Romania vis-à-vis the status of Kosovo and do not presume in anyway the recognition by Romania of the statehood of the 'Republic of Kosovo'."<sup>242</sup> So this is in line with Romania's policy and approach up to that point, which was to actually be careful to even not implicitly give a statement which would in one way or another imply that Romania has recognized Kosovo as an international subject. On the other hand, Romania's such an approach has made life extremely difficult for the officials at Romania's Ministry of Foreign Affairs which constantly has to watch in case Romania is, even subconsciously, sliding into making an implicit recognition without its conscious consent<sup>243</sup>

Lastly, due to low intensity of relations and not many bilateral meetings between Kosovo and the non-recognizers, there have been no particular mentions regarding the support for the dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia. Although, given that Greece and Romania are Member States of the EU which facilitates the dialogue, they could be considered as supporters of the dialogue. There have been no direct statement from BiH officials in regards to the dialogue; nonetheless, the Serb representatives of BiH, view the dialogue more from Serbia's perspective and have a national interest - zero sum - approach, rather than a more constructive approach that they would look forward to. So unlike Albania, which views the dialogue from its Euro-Atlantic partners and has not gone beyond their stance, BiH Serb representatives have been more vociferous on supporting the Serbian cause in Kosovo, rather than the normalisation of relations between the two states.

### **3.3 Intensity of relations with the other non-recognizers in the region**

#### ***3.3.1 Intensity of bilateral relations/contacts - Kosovo and BiH***

The intensity of Kosovo's bilateral relations/contacts with BiH are mostly *not active*. BiH ranks only above Romania with the level of intensity of relations it has with Kosovo and ranks way below Serbia and Greece as the other two non-recognizers in the region. The inactive relations between Kosovo and BiH derive from the overall bilateral activity in terms of meetings at Presidential, Prime Ministerial, and Foreign Ministerial levels where none have occurred since the Declaration of Independence of Kosovo. There have been, however, some unofficial meetings, which reflect the divisions between the representatives of the constituent peoples of BiH. For instance, while the

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<sup>240</sup> Ibid.

<sup>241</sup> Internal document from MFA

<sup>242</sup> See Agreement of the International Monetary Fund, Reservation, declarations and objections, Romania, 13 August, 2009 at, <http://www.minbuza.nl/en/key-topics/treaties/search-the-treaty-database/1945/12/006615.html?printpart=reservations>.

<sup>243</sup> Officials in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in "Kosovo Calling".

Bosniak member of the Presidency who supports Kosovo's independence has occasionally "met with Kosovo representatives on the sidelines of international events",<sup>244</sup> the Prime Minister of Republika Srpska in BiH, Milorad Dodik, has visited the northern part of Kosovo in the first half of 2013 where he reiterated his support for the Serbian cause of strengthening the Association between the Serb municipalities.<sup>245</sup>

Besides the lack of high official meetings between the parties which contributes to inactive relations between the two states, there have been some mutual visits on lower levels. For instance, few representatives of civil society from BiH visited Kosovo in 2009 where fostering cooperation in education sector was the main topic. The cooperation between the University of Bosnia and the University of Prishtina was signed with the intention to facilitate the exchange of experiences and capacity building between BiH and Kosovo, as it was noted by the Rector of the University of Mostar present at the meeting.<sup>246</sup> Additionally, on 21 June 2012, a BiH delegation of Members of the Parliament, artists, analysts, civil society and media representatives conducted a visit in Kosovo.<sup>247</sup> They were received by the Kosovo President who advocated for BiH to enable free movement of

Kosovo's intensity of relations with the non-recognizing states in the region

	State	Points	Intensity
	Albania	3.75	Very intensive
	Turkey	2.25	Intensive
	Macedonia	2.00	Moderately intensive
	Croatia	2.00	Moderately intensive
	Slovenia	2.00	Moderately intensive
	Bulgaria	1.00	Moderately intensive
7	<b>Greece</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>Moderately intensive</b>
8	<b>Serbia</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>Moderately intensive</b>
	Montenegro	0.75	Not active
10	<b>B&amp;H</b>	<b>0.50</b>	<b>Not active</b>
11	<b>Romania</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>Not active</b>

goods and people from Kosovo and praised the involvement and commitments of Bosnian community in Kosovo while informing them that maybe soon a Bosniak majority municipality could be soon established in Kosovo.<sup>248</sup> What contributes a bit to the intensity of relations between the two states is the average yearly trade exchange which, between 2009-2012, has been around 71.5 million Euros;<sup>249</sup> nonetheless, compared to trade exchange between Kosovo and other regional countries, the current trade volume between the two states is low enough to not increase the level of intensity of relations between the two states.

### 3.3.2 Intensity of bilateral relations/contacts - Kosovo and Greece

The intensity of bilateral relations between Kosovo and Greece are *moderately intensive*. Even though Greece is among the four non-recognizers of the region, its intensity of relations with Kosovo are at a higher level than with Kosovo's neighbour Montenegro, for instance. The moderately intensive relations between Kosovo and Greece derive from the overall bilateral activity in terms of meetings in Presidential, Prime Ministerial, and Foreign Ministerial as well as trade exchange between the two parties. Economic and trade relations are what contributes more to the current level of intensity of relations between Kosovo and Greece, while meetings and visits of the above mentioned high ranking officials have not been so frequent. Nonetheless, unlike with BiH and Romania, Greece has been more open to meetings with and visits of Kosovo's high ranking officials, and has at least maintained institutional communication with the Kosovo authorities.

<sup>244</sup> "Kosovo Calling", 157.

<sup>245</sup> "Dodik: There will be no Belgrade-Prishtina deal", accessed January 20, 2014, [http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics.php?yyyy=2013&mm=04&dd=12&nav\\_id=85672](http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics.php?yyyy=2013&mm=04&dd=12&nav_id=85672).

<sup>246</sup> Meeting of President Fatmir Sejdiu with Rector Suzana Bubic, <http://www.president-ksgov.net/?page=1,6,308>.

<sup>247</sup> "President Jahjaga received a delegation from Bosnia and Herzegovina", <http://www.president-ksgov.net/?page=2,6,2401>.

<sup>248</sup> Ibid.

<sup>249</sup> "Kosovo in Regional Context: Economic and Trade Relations", KIPRED, 32-35.

Although Greece has not recognized Kosovo as an independent state, ever since the Declaration of Independence, its policy has been to keep communication channels open in order to improve social and economic conditions. This is in line with Greece's priority strategy for the region, which is security and stability. Although contacts between the officials of the two parties occurred, there have been no commitments yet regarding a potential change of Greece's position towards Kosovo.<sup>250</sup> Since the Declaration of Independence in February 2008, only 4 mutual visits have taken place. Greece's officials have been more active in visiting Kosovo than the other way around. For instance, Greece's foreign ministers have visited Kosovo three times since 2008; Foreign Minister, Dora Bakoyannis completed his visit to Kosovo on 3 February 2009,<sup>251</sup> where she met Kosovo's Prime Minister, Hashim Thaçi to discuss, among others, the current developments in Kosovo, the OSCE mission in Kosovo (as at the time she had been the rotating chairperson of the OSCE), and the forms of further cooperation between Kosovo and Greece.<sup>252</sup> Her successor, Dimitrois Droutsas completed his visit to Kosovo on 31 July 2010;<sup>253</sup> and a five months serving Foreign Minister, Stavros Lambrinidis, visited Kosovo amidst his time in office, on 8 September 2011.<sup>254</sup> While the first high ranking Kosovo official to visit Greece was the current Foreign Minister, Enver Hoxhaj, who completed his visit on 8 March 2013.<sup>255</sup>

The high ranking officials of both countries have also met in several multilateral occasions. Kosovo's Prime Minister of Kosovo, Hashim Thaçi has met with the former Greek Foreign Minister and the current Deputy Prime Minister, Enagelos Venizelos, in September 2013, in New York at the UN Headquarters. Among the topics of discussion were the procedures regarding freedom of movement, where Mr Thaçi has asked Mr. Venizelos to make it possible for the Kosovo citizens to travel to Greece with Schengen visas, without having to apply for a separate Greek visa, as is the case to date. They also discussed about strengthening cooperation in economic area by opening commercial economic offices in both capitals, as a first step toward formalizing relations between the two countries, which would be in the interest of both their economies. The Deputy Prime Minister Venizelos reassured Greece's position that it supports the European integration agenda for the entire region, including Kosovo.<sup>256</sup>

These bilateral meetings are positive from the perspective of at least maintaining normal relations between the two parties, short of recognition; although, the frequency of the level of these meetings do not necessarily contribute a lot in making the relations between the two parties more intensive, compared to the intensity of the relations between Kosovo and some other states in the region. One of the most important aspects that contributes to the intensity of relations between the parties is the

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<sup>250</sup> See visit of Greece officials at, <http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/?page=2,9,2322> and <http://www.president-ks.gov.net/?page=1,6,1756>

<sup>251</sup> "Prime Minister Hashim Thaçi meets Greek Foreign Minister Dora Bakoyannis", accessed January 25, 2014, <http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/?page=2,9,171>.

<sup>252</sup> Ibid.

<sup>253</sup> "Sejdiu: It's the right time for Greece to recognize Kosovo", accessed January 25, 2014, <http://www.president-ks.gov.net/?page=1,6,1273>.

<sup>254</sup> "Prime Minister Hashim Thaçi meets Greek Foreign Minister Stavros Lambrinidis", accessed January 25, 2014, <http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/?page=2,9,2322>.

<sup>255</sup> "Hoxhaj në Athinë: Kapitull i ri në marrëdhëniet Kosovë-Greqi", accessed January 26, 2014, <http://www.mfa-ks.net/?page=1,4,1611>.

<sup>256</sup> "Today, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Kosovo, Hashim Thaçi meets the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Greece, Evangelos Venizelos", accessed January 26, 2014, <http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/?page=2,9,3774>.

trade exchange volume. The yearly average trade exchange during 2008-2012 between the two states has been around 96 million Euros, making Greece Kosovo's 5<sup>th</sup> regional trading partner.<sup>257</sup>

### 3.3.3 Intensity of bilateral relations/contacts - Kosovo and Romania

The bilateral relations between Kosovo and Romania are *not active*. Romania is one of the countries that bottoms the list of countries in the region in terms of the level of intensity of bilateral relations between them and Kosovo. The relations between Kosovo and Romania are even less intensive than the already inactive relations between Kosovo and BiH, where the only meaningful activity between the two states is trade exchange. Kosovo's inactive relations with Romania stem from both political inactivity (meetings and visits at Presidential, Prime Ministerial, and Foreign Ministerial levels) and economic inactivity in general. Unlike the case with Greece, there have been neither official nor unofficial visit even at lower institutional levels. Even those within Romania's political elite who support Kosovo's recognition, like the Prime Minister and other officials in the government, have not initiated any potential bilateral meeting or visit to Prishtina or in Bucharesht - this is because Romania does not want to send any signal that implies even an implicit recognition or any other form of recognition of sovereign authority of Prishtina over Kosovo.

There have been some contacts in a multilateral character outside Kosovo's and Romania's soil. For instance, Kosovo's Foreign Minister has been invited by its Romanian counterpart in the SEECP meeting in New York and the following one which is to be held in Bucharest.<sup>258</sup> This is a positive move, at least for the improvement of intensity of relations without necessarily improving quality that implies swift recognition. Kosovo's and Romania's officials did use the opportunity to meet in New York in other occasions as well, which has been a step forward from Romania's previous rejection to establish any contact with a Kosovo official at any level.<sup>259</sup> On the other hand Romanian officials within Romania's Liaison Office in Prishtina, do meet Kosovo officials either to facilitate a message or consider any difficulties that Romania's entrepreneurs could encounter in Kosovo.<sup>260</sup> The Romanian national day on 29 November 2013 was celebrated in Prishtina where the diplomatic corps, NGOs, as well as Kosovo government officials took place.<sup>261</sup> In general, Romania has kept both, the intensity and the quality of relations with Kosovo at lower levels than Serbia has in the fundamental aspects that this paper considers.

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<sup>257</sup> Publications for external trade, Office of the Prime Minister, Kosovo Agency of Statistics.

<sup>258</sup> "Hoxhaj: Pa Kosovën, bashkëpunimi rajonal nuk është i plotë", <http://www.mfa-ks.net/?page=1,4,1889>, and "Minister Hoxhaj travels to Romania to the SEECP Summit", <http://www.mfa-ks.net/?page=2,4,2245>.

<sup>259</sup> KIPRED source, September 30, 2013.

<sup>260</sup> Ibid.

<sup>261</sup> 20 November 2013, ceremony of Romanian national day.

## 4 KOSOVO AND THE OTHER EU MEMBER STATES IN THE REGION

### 4.1 Foreign and regional policies

The other three EU Member States of the region (Croatia, Slovenia, and Bulgaria) share similar, though not identical, regional and foreign policies in terms of their nature, similar to the other two EU Member States of the region discussed earlier (Romania and Greece). The similarities are that all of them are concerned with and are focused on regional security and stability; many of them share these concerns for their immediate neighbourhood, and some other for the wider region. Croatia's regional role and aspirations, for instance, are to establish permanent peace, stability, and development of the wider South Eastern Europe, and calls this role 'irreplaceable'.<sup>262</sup> In terms of its regional policy, Croatia also focuses on establishing good neighbourly relations based on "equality and reciprocity, and in finding a political way based on the international law to solve all the remaining open issues after the breakup of Former Yugoslavia."<sup>263</sup> Having completed its aspirations for membership in NATO in 2009 and membership in the EU in 2013, Croatia's first priority now remains enhancing relations with neighbouring countries, which are Serbia, BiH, Slovenia, Hungary, and Italy across the Adriatic.<sup>264</sup> Croatia also pays a particular attention to multilateral regional organisations, forums, as well as initiatives.<sup>265</sup>

Similarly, Slovenia's regional policy is not focused only on its immediate neighbours, neither it is focused to the wider in the region; it focuses mostly on the issues pertaining to the Western Balkans, meaning its former sister republics of Yugoslavia, including Kosovo, which are a priority area for Slovenian interest and activity.<sup>266</sup> Slovenia's focus on the Western Balkans stems from its interdependence, both economically and politically, with most of this region that it has inherited historically as a former constituent member of the former Yugoslavia. Being a member of the EU for close to a decade now, Slovenia, just like most of the other EU Member States of the region, is a staunch supporter of the Western Balkans integration into the EU and NATO.<sup>267</sup> Furthermore, given its special interests in the Western Balkans, in July 2010, Slovenia has devised 'Guidelines for Slovenia's policy in the Western Balkans' which aims at coordinating government intra-ministerial activities that relate to the Western Balkans with particular interest for the region's EU and NATO integration.<sup>268</sup>

Bulgaria's regional policy and priorities correspond more closely to those of Romania, especially with its special focus on the Black Sea region.<sup>269</sup> For Bulgaria, cooperation with the countries from the Black Sea region "enhances the chances of positive development through close interaction with the European and Euro-Atlantic integration process, focused as it is on the implementation of the economic programs and infrastructural projects of regional and European significance."<sup>270</sup> Bulgaria's

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<sup>262</sup> "Foreign Policy Aims", MFA Croatia.

<sup>263</sup> Ibid.

<sup>264</sup> Ibid.

<sup>265</sup> Ibid.

<sup>266</sup> "Foreign Policy – Western Balkans", Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Slovenia, accessed, January 8, 2014,

[http://www.mzz.gov.si/en/foreign\\_policy/foreign\\_policy/western\\_balkans/](http://www.mzz.gov.si/en/foreign_policy/foreign_policy/western_balkans/).

<sup>267</sup> Ibid.

<sup>268</sup> Ibid.

<sup>269</sup> "Foreign Affairs", Embassy of the Republic of Bulgaria in London.

<sup>270</sup> Ibid.

top priority countries in the region are Romania and Greece (EU and NATO members), Cyprus (EU Member), and Turkey (NATO member).<sup>271</sup> Though, unlike Romania, and similar to the other EU Member States in the region, the Western Balkans and its integration in the EU and NATO are also a priority for Bulgaria, on similar grounds that the integration of the region in these two bodies bring peace and stability in the region.

Given that all the other three EU Member States in the region are members of the EU and NATO, they share most of their foreign policy objectives and policies. In general, all three of these states, Croatia, Slovenia, and Bulgaria aim for the preservation and strengthening of peace and understanding in international arena. On the other hand, given that Croatia and Slovenia used to be constituent members of the former Yugoslavia, their particular focus remains with solving the open issues after the breakup of Yugoslavia; this is especially the case with Croatia.<sup>272</sup> Similarly, given Slovenia's right to self-determination from former Yugoslavia, one of the foreign policy directions that Slovenia takes is that it "respects and upholds the right of nations to self-determination."<sup>273</sup>

Just like with most countries of the region, the United States plays a special role in foreign policies of these three EU Member States of the region. Croatia for instance, considers the relations with US to be of a "special significance", and that "[s]trengthening partnership relations with the US can have a positive effect on Croatia's overall international position and the realization of its concrete foreign policy goals."<sup>274</sup> China and Russia are also on the list of countries that Croatia keeps friendly relations with, in both, political and economic aspects.<sup>275</sup> The US also plays an important role in Bulgaria's foreign policy.<sup>276</sup> Bulgaria views EU-US relations as important for its foreign policy, and attempts to develop solid relations with the US and intensify the political dialogue and cooperation in all levels; one of Bulgaria's aims in its relations with the US is the abolishing the visa entry to US for Bulgarian citizens.<sup>277</sup> Just like most of the other states in the region, Russia also finds an important spot in Bulgaria's foreign policy with which it is "keen on continuing to maintain stable, friendly and predictable relations"<sup>278</sup> Slovenia's foreign policy does not focus on a specific state actor or global power; however, it pays special attention to the EU and NATO as a strategic interest for Slovenia.<sup>279</sup>

## 4.2 Quality of relations with the other EU Member States

### 4.2.1 *Bilateral relations with SLOVENIA*

Bilateral relations between Kosovo and Slovenia are *very good*, a qualification which cannot be attributed to the other EU Member States in the region that have recognized Kosovo. Slovenia is among the EU Member States in the region, which Kosovo enjoys best bilateral relations with. Kosovo's bilateral relations with Slovenia are even better than with all its neighbours besides Albania. Actually, after Turkey and Albania, states which Kosovo enjoys excellent relations with, Slovenia is the third state in the region which Kosovo enjoys better relations with, and that it

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<sup>271</sup> Ibid.

<sup>272</sup> "Foreign Policy Aims", MFA Croatia.

<sup>273</sup> "Foreign Policy – Western Balkans", MFA Slovenia.

<sup>274</sup> "Foreign Policy Aims", MFA Croatia.

<sup>275</sup> Ibid.

<sup>276</sup> "Foreign Affairs", Embassy of the Republic of Bulgaria in London.

<sup>277</sup> Ibid.

<sup>278</sup> Ibid.

<sup>279</sup> "Foreign Policy – Western Balkans", MFA Slovenia.

considers Kosovo to be the priority country in the region because "Slovenia wants the entire region to be free, stable, and economically friendly".<sup>280</sup> These very good bilateral relations derive from the overall score Slovenia gets in fundamental aspects of its bilateral relations with Kosovo. First, compared to other EU Member States in the region, Slovenia has recognized Kosovo on 5 March 2008, which is within the first month of its Declaration of Independence.<sup>281</sup> Diplomatic relations and relations at ambassadorial level between the two states were also established within a month of the Declaration of Independence and only 10 days after Slovenia recognized Kosovo.<sup>282</sup>

Slovenia appointed its first Ambassador to Prishtina (Vojko Volk, who had previously served as head of the Liaison Office of Slovenia in Prishtina)<sup>283</sup> already in 2008, which is sooner than Albania or Turkey did. Slovenia continued with its diplomatic representation at the Ambassadorial level in Prishtina, ever since it appointed its first Ambassador. Its second Ambassador to Kosovo was Jožef Help, who commenced his service in Prishtina on 5 February 2009 up until 5 September 2013, when he was replaced by Slovenia's current Ambassador to Prishtina, Mr Miljan Majhen.<sup>284</sup> Kosovo, on the other hand, appointed its first Ambassador to Ljubljana (Anton Berisha) only much later, on 5 January 2010, which is around two years after Slovenia had recognized Kosovo. Just like Slovenia, ever since Kosovo appointed its first Ambassador to Ljubljana, its diplomatic representation has for the most part remained at the Ambassadorial level. Kosovo's first Ambassador to Ljubljana was replaced on 1 June 2012 by Mimoza Ahmetaj, who was also replaced around a year after on 30 September 2013 by Nexhmi Rexhepi.<sup>285</sup>

Kosovo's quality of relations with the other  
EU Member States in the region

State	Points	Quality
Turkey	4.00	Excellent
Albania	3.88	Excellent
<b>3 Slovenia</b>	<b>3.25</b>	<b>Very Good</b>
Macedonia	3.13	Very Good
<b>5 Croatia</b>	<b>2.63</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>6 Bulgaria</b>	<b>2.75</b>	<b>Good</b>
Montenegro	1.88	Fair
Serbia	0.75	Poor
Greece	0.25	Poor
Romania	0.13	Poor
B&H	0.00	Poor

Second, Slovenia ranks 2<sup>nd</sup> among the EU Member States of the region, and 6<sup>th</sup> among all the countries of the region with the number of bilateral agreements that both states have signed, 6 in total, plus two additional memorandums of cooperation.<sup>286</sup> The nature of the agreements between Kosovo and Slovenia is diverse, and they range from economic and development cooperation, to cooperation between the respective parliaments, and culture.

Lastly, among the countries in the region Slovenia has been the largest investor in Kosovo with average yearly investments of 31 million Euro between 2008-2012, which enhances the quality of relations between the two states.<sup>287</sup> Besides diplomatic and business presence in Kosovo, Slovenia is

<sup>280</sup> Miljan Majhen (Ambassador, Slovenian Embassy in Kosovo), interview in Prishtina, September 24, 2013.

<sup>281</sup> See the countries that have recognized Kosovo at, <http://www.kosovothanksyou.com/>.

<sup>282</sup> MFA internal document.

<sup>283</sup> "Presidenti Sejdiu priti ambasadorin e Sllovenisë, z. Vojko Volk", accessed January 25, 2014, <http://www.president-ksgov.net/?page=1.6.1050>

<sup>284</sup> "President Jahjaga received the Ambassador of the Republic of Slovenia, Mr. Miljan Majhen", accessed January 26, 2013, <http://www.president-ksgov.net/?page=1.8.3021>

<sup>285</sup> See at, <http://www.ambasada-ks.net/si/?page=1.8.81>

<sup>286</sup> International Agreements, Official Gazette of the Republic of Kosovo, accessed November 20, 2013, <http://gazetazyrtare.rks-gov.net/MN.aspx>

<sup>287</sup> "Direct investments in Kosovo", Central Bank of Kosovo, accessed January 23, 2014, <https://docs.google.com/viewer?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.bqk->



also one of the top regional contributors in terms of number of troops to NATO-led KFOR; only after Turkey, contributing 314 troops.<sup>288</sup> The deputy commander of KFOR is also a Slovenian national.<sup>289</sup> Slovenia also contributes to EULEX where it maintains 23 personnel,<sup>290</sup> and the head of EU Office in Kosovo, Smauel Zbogar is also a Slovenian national. In summary, Slovenia is present at almost all levels in both, political and business sectors.

#### 4.2.2 *Bilateral relations with CROATIA*

Bilateral relations between Kosovo and Croatia are *good*, which is the same qualification that is evident with Bulgaria as another EU Member State that has recognized Kosovo. Nonetheless, Croatia is among the EU Member States in the region, which Kosovo enjoys a slightly better relations with, compared to Bulgaria, and slightly worse compared to Slovenia. These good bilateral relations derive from the overall score Croatia gets in fundamental aspects of its bilateral relations with Kosovo. First, Croatia recognized Kosovo on 19 March 2009<sup>291</sup>, which means it took Croatia more than a month to make the formal recognition, unlike the case with Albania, Turkey, and Slovenia which are the only countries in the region that recognized Kosovo within the first month. Diplomatic relations and relations at ambassadorial level between the two states were established on 30 June 2008, around 3 months after Croatia has made the formal recognition, unlike Slovenia, which is the other EU Member State in the region that has moved more swiftly than Croatia in establishing diplomatic relations with Kosovo.<sup>292</sup>

It's worth noting that Croatia appointed its first Ambassador to Prishtina (Zlatko Kramaric) on 17 January 2009, less than a year after Kosovo's Declaration of Independence. Before Mr. Kramaric's appointment, Croatia was represented through Dario Malnar who was the Head of the Liaison Office of Croatia in Prishtina until 7 November 2008, a period after which Mr. Malnar served as Chargé d'affaires, until January when Mr. Kramaric took his position as the first Ambassador to Kosovo. Just like with most of the other states of the region which Kosovo enjoys good or excellent relations with, Croatia was represented at Ambassadorial level ever since the appointment of its first Ambassador without any significant interruptions. After Mr. Kramaric's term ended in December 2010, Croatia appointed, Zoran Vodopija, as its new Ambassador to Prishtina immediately in March 2011 who is the one that serves to the present day.<sup>293</sup> It is worth mentioning that, unlike the case with the two neighbours of Kosovo (Macedonia and Montenegro), Croatia has not conditioned Kosovo with more constitutional rights for the Croats living in Kosovo, when it recognized Kosovo, established diplomatic relations, or sent an Ambassador. The Croatian Embassy in Prishtina, is however, under pressure to assist the few Croats that are left in Kosovo, but Kosovo has also promised to grant the Croats living in Kosovo additional constitutional rights<sup>294</sup>

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[.kos.org/2Frepository/2Fdocs/2Ftime\\_series/2F34/2520Foreign/2520direct/2520investments/2520-%2520by/2520country.xls](http://www.kosovo.org/2Frepository/2Fdocs/2Ftime_series/2F34/2520Foreign/2520direct/2520investments/2520-%2520by/2520country.xls) .

<sup>288</sup> "Troop Numbers & Contribution Nations", NATO, accessed December 22, 2013, <http://www.aco.nato.int/kfor/about-us/troop-numbers-contributions.aspx>.

<sup>289</sup> According to the official page of KFOR, the number of Albanian troops in KFOR is 308 and the number of Slovenian personnel in EULEX is 23. [http://www.nato.int/kfor/structur/nations/placemat/kfor\\_placemat.pdf](http://www.nato.int/kfor/structur/nations/placemat/kfor_placemat.pdf).

<sup>290</sup> KIPRED Email communication with EULEX spokesperson in July, 2013.

<sup>291</sup> See the countries that have recognized Kosovo at, <http://www.kosovothankyou.com/>.

<sup>292</sup> MFA internal document

<sup>293</sup> "The new Croatian Ambassador presents his credentials", accessed January 29, 2014, <http://www.president-ksgov.net/?page=2,6,1633>.

<sup>294</sup> "Croatian minority in Kosovo", State Office for Croats Abroad, accessed Januar 29, 2014, <http://www.hrvatiizvanrh.hr/en/hmiu/croatian-minority-in-kosovo/8>.

When it comes to Kosovo's side, it took Prishtina around one year and a half after the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two states to assign its first Ambassador to Croatia. Kosovo appointed Valdet Sadiku as the First Plenipotentiary Ambassador of the Republic of Kosovo in Croatia on 29 December 2009, who was later replaced after taking the mission as Kosovo's Liaison Officer to Belgrade in June 2013.<sup>295</sup> Mr. Sadiku was not replaced immediately, however. The Embassy was being represented by the deputy Ambassador Urtak Hamiti, who within few months, was arrested by Croatian authorities for his undignified and unprofessional behaviour during his service in Croatia, as a result of which the Kosovo MFA received a protest note.<sup>296</sup> Mr. Hamiti, besides being caught drunk driving, he had apparently refused to present diplomatic credentials to Croatian police officers and acted unprofessionally.<sup>297</sup> Immediately, a few months after this scandal, Kosovo appointed its former Ambassador to Budapest, Ms. Shkëndije Geci Sherifi as Kosovo's new Ambassador to Zagreb in August 2013.<sup>298</sup>

Second, Croatia ranks 1<sup>st</sup> among the EU Member States of the region, and 5<sup>th</sup> among all the states of the region with the number of bilateral agreements that both states have signed, 8 in total, plus one additional MoU.<sup>299</sup> The agreements between the two states differ in nature and regulate a range of matters in fields such as judicial, economic, education, defence, etc.<sup>300</sup>

Lastly, what makes Croatia have slightly worse relations with Kosovo compared to Slovenia, for instance, are the low investments of Croatia in Kosovo. Croatia ranks just above BiH in terms of yearly investments to Kosovo, and below most of the non-recognizers of the region. Croatia has invested only 1.2 million Euros a year on average between 2008-2012.<sup>301</sup> Besides diplomatic and business presence in Kosovo, Croatia also contributes with troops and personnel to KFOR and EULEX respectively, though not in high numbers compared to the other states in the region. It participates with 23 troops in KFOR<sup>302</sup> and 14 personnel in EULEX.<sup>303</sup>

#### **4.2.3 Bilateral relations with BULGARIA**

Bilateral relations between Kosovo and Bulgaria are *good*, just like Kosovo's relations with Croatia as another EU Member State in the region. However, besides the overall good relations between the two states, when compared to the other EU countries in the region that have recognized Kosovo, Bulgaria ranks the lowest, meaning it enjoys slightly worse relations with Kosovo than do Slovenia and Croatia. These good bilateral relations derive from the overall score Bulgaria gets in fundamental aspects of its bilateral relations with Kosovo. First, Bulgaria recognized Kosovo on 23 March

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<sup>295</sup> "President Jahjaga recieved Ambassador Valdet Sadiku", accessed January 28, 2014, <http://www.president-ks.gov.net/?page=1,6,2983>.

<sup>296</sup> See Kosovo MFA Press Release of August 2, 2013, accessed January 28, 2014, <http://www.mfa-ks.net/?page=1,4,1814>.

<sup>297</sup> KIPRED Interview with a Kosovo journalist who has followed the case, 28 October 2013, Prishtina.

<sup>298</sup> "Shkëndije Geci ambasadore në Zagreb, rasti Hamiti i mbyllur", accessed January 28, 2014, <http://www.koha.net/?page=1,13,154609>.

<sup>299</sup> International Agreements, Official Gazette of the Republic of Kosovo, accessed November 20, 2013, <http://gazetazyrtare.rks-gov.net/MN.aspx>.

<sup>300</sup> International Agreements, Official Gazette of the Republic of Kosovo,

<sup>301</sup> "Kosovo in Regional Context: Economic and Trade Relations", KIPRED, 29-32.

<sup>302</sup> "Troop Numbers & Contribution Nations", NATO, accessed December 22, 2013, <http://www.aco.nato.int/kfor/about-us/troop-numbers-contributions.aspx>.

<sup>303</sup> KIPRED Email communication with EULEX spokesperson in July, 2013.

2009<sup>304</sup>, five days after Croatia has done so, which means it took Bulgaria more than a month to make the formal recognition, unlike the case with Albania, Turkey, and Slovenia which are the only countries in the region that have recognized Kosovo within the first month. Bulgaria is the 5th state among 11 other states of the region that have recognized Kosovo. Diplomatic relations and relations at ambassadorial level between the two states were established on 27 May 2008, close to 3 months after Bulgaria has made the formal recognition; which means that diplomatic relations between Kosovo and Bulgaria were established sooner than with Croatia.<sup>305</sup>

Unlike with the other EU Member States of the region that have recognized Kosovo, Bulgaria appointed its first Ambassador to Prishtina (Krasimir Tulechki) on 28 October 2009, more than a year and a half after Kosovo's Declaration of Independence.<sup>306</sup> Bulgaria's Embassy inherited Bulgaria's previous presence through its Liaison Office in Prishtina. Just like with most of the other states of the region which Kosovo enjoys good or excellent relations with, Bulgaria was represented at Ambassadorial level ever since the appointment of its first Ambassador for most of the time. After Mr. Tulechki's term ended on 2 August 2010, Bulgaria appointed, Bobi Bobev, as its new Ambassador to Prishtina on 2 November 2010 who still continues to serve.<sup>307</sup>

When it comes to Kosovo's side, it took Prishtina around two years after the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two states to assign its first Ambassador to Bulgaria. Kosovo appointed Ariana Zherka-Hoxha as the First Plenipotentiary Ambassador of the Republic of Kosovo in Bulgaria on 30 April 2010.<sup>308</sup> Kosovo also maintained an almost uninterrupted presence in Bulgaria at Ambassadorial level ever since it appointed its first Ambassador. After Zherka-Hoxha's mandate ended on 4 June 2012, Kosovo appointed Shpend Kallaba as its next Ambassador to Albania immediately on 29 June 2012, who has been quite active in its bilateral and multilateral meetings in Sofia and elsewhere in Bulgaria.

Second, Bulgaria ranks 3<sup>rd</sup> among the EU Member States of the region, and 7<sup>th</sup> among all the countries of the region with the number of bilateral agreements that both states have signed, 5 in total.<sup>309</sup> The agreements between the two states differ in nature and regulate a range of matters such as police, transport, and so on. With Bulgaria's initiative, the two states have signed a memorandum of cooperation on issues that pertain to European integration in 2 December 2013.<sup>310</sup>

Lastly, Bulgaria ranks above Croatia, and just below Kosovo's main investment partners Slovenia, Turkey, and Albania, in terms of its investments in Kosovo. Bulgaria has invested only 2.8 million Euros a year on average between 2008-2012, more than two times the investments of Croatia in the Kosovo.<sup>311</sup> Besides diplomatic and business presence in Kosovo, Bulgaria also contributes with troops and personnel to KFOR and EULEX respectively, though it is one of the lowest contributors

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<sup>304</sup> See the countries that have recognized Kosovo at <http://www.kosovothanksyou.com/>.

<sup>305</sup> MFA internal document.

<sup>306</sup> See the link for further information, accessed January 25, 2014, <http://www.president-ksgov.net/?page=1,6,1274>.

<sup>307</sup> "Bulgaria's Ambassador Bobi Bobev presents his credentials", accessed January 22, 2014, <http://www.president-ksgov.net/?page=2,6,1434>.

<sup>308</sup> "Sejdiu dekretoi ambasadoren e Kosovës në Bullgari", accessed January 20, 2014, <http://www.telegrafi.com/lajme/sejdiu-dekretoi-ambasadoren-e-kosoves-ne-bullgari-2-5269.html>

<sup>309</sup> International Agreements, Official Gazette of the Republic of Kosovo.

<sup>310</sup> Bobi Bobev (Ambassador, Bulgarian Embassy in Kosovo), interview in Prishtina, October 3, 2013.

<sup>311</sup> "Kosovo in Regional Context: Economic and Trade Relations", KIPRED, 29-32.

in KFOR structures, Bulgaria is the largest contributors in terms of personnel in EULEX structures, compared to the other states of the region. It participates with 11 troops in KFOR<sup>312</sup> and 91 personnel in EULEX.<sup>313</sup>

#### **4.2.1 Kosovo's additional bilateral matters with other EU Member States**

Freedom of movement for Kosovo citizens to another country, and lack of barriers to movement thereof, is another fundamental aspect that contributes to the quality of bilateral relations between the states. As far as the EU Member States of the region that have recognized Kosovo are concerned, all of them score low in this fundamental aspect, because all of them apply barriers to entry to Kosovo citizens. Slovenia is part of the Schengen area, whereas Croatia and Bulgaria are legally required to apply Schengen rules to citizens of third countries; therefore, all these three EU Member States of the region apply entry visas to Kosovo citizens.<sup>314</sup> On the other hand, Kosovo has never applied barriers to entry for any of the EU Member States.<sup>315</sup>

#### **4.2.2 The other EU Member States in Kosovo's international subjectivity**

The EU Member States in the region that have recognized Kosovo all support the strengthening of Kosovo's international subjectivity and representation as an independent and sovereign state, although the extent to which each of these states support Kosovo varies. After Martti Ahtisaari's initial proposal on Kosovo's conditional independence, and just a few months before Kosovo declared its independence, Slovenia played a very important role in attempting to consolidate the EU's common stance and prepare the ground within the EU regarding Kosovo's (then) future Declaration of Independence. From January 2008 to June 2008, Slovenia held the Presidency of the EU Council, and used its position as the President country of the EU to put the Kosovo issue high in the agenda and push in supporting Kosovo's independence.<sup>316</sup>

Additionally, Slovenia voted neither for nor against Serbia's UNGA resolution of 8 October 2008 for submitting Kosovo's case to the ICJ, and it neither did it boycott the meeting like some other countries did; Slovenia just decided to abstain.<sup>317</sup> Nonetheless, Slovenia submitted a positive written declaration in support to the legality of Kosovo's Declaration of Independence before the ICJ in both cases: first on 17 April 2009 and second, it has sent additional supportive statements before the second deadline on 24 July 2009.<sup>318</sup> Slovenia, on the other hand, did not provide any oral statements during the follow up December 2009 public hearing before the ICJ. Slovenia has also voted in support for Kosovo's membership in the IMF on 3 May 2009 and in the World Bank on 3 June 2009.<sup>319</sup> Additionally, Slovenia has offered continuous technical assistance to Kosovo in areas of integration processes in Euro-Atlantic structures, and being a former constituent member of the former Yugoslavia and a current member of the EU, makes Slovenia a good candidate to provide support not only to Kosovo but to the entire region in this regard. Slovenians have also supported

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<sup>312</sup> "Troop Numbers & Contribution Nations", NATO, accessed December 22, 2013, <http://www.aco.nato.int/kfor/about-us/troop-numbers-contributions.aspx>.

<sup>313</sup> KIPRED Email communication with EULEX spokesperson in July, 2013.

<sup>314</sup> "Visas for Kosovo citizens", MFA Kosovo.

<sup>315</sup> "Who doesn't need a visa?", MFA Kosovo.

<sup>316</sup> Miljan Majhen (Ambassador, Slovenian Embassy in Kosovo), interview in Prishtina, September 24, 2013.

<sup>317</sup> Internal document from MFA.

<sup>318</sup> See the link for further information on the document submitted from MFA Slovenia in ICJ for the case of Kosovo, accessed December 22, 2013, <http://www.icj-cij.org/docket/files/141/15696.pdf>.

<sup>319</sup> Internal document from MFA.

Kosovo and its cause for freedom and independence in several other occasions, where Slovenians themselves organized protests in order to raise the attention about the Kosovo problems.<sup>320</sup>

Croatia has also been one of the supporters of Kosovo's independence. Similar to Slovenia, Croatia has abstained, for instance, on Serbia's 8 October 2008 resolution to the UNGA for submitting Kosovo's case to the ICJ.<sup>321</sup> Croatia did not submit any written statements nor additional comments before the ICJ's deadlines to do so on 17 April 2009 and 24 July 2009, neither in support nor against the legality of Kosovo's Declaration of Independence. However, Croatia has made a positive oral declaration before the ICJ's public hearing during December 2009 by arguing that "Kosovo was a constituent part of Yugoslavia and therefore had the right to self-determination and declaration of independence; [and that] Kosovo Albanians, although they form 90 percent of Kosovo population, have for years been victims of repression by Serbian authorities. The will of the people should be the basic element in determining the final status of Kosovo."<sup>322</sup> Croatia, just like the other supporters of Kosovo's strengthened international legitimacy and representation, supported Kosovo's membership in the IMF by voting for its membership on 3 May 2009, and it also supported Kosovo's membership in the World Bank by voting for its membership on 3 June 2009.<sup>323</sup> Given that regional security and stability is part of its foreign policy priorities, Croatia is a staunch supporter of Kosovo's membership in Euro-Atlantic structures and strongly supports Kosovo's representation in regional organisations and forums. This was evidenced when Croatia decided to boycott the Ohrid Summit in response to Macedonia's President's decision not to invite Kosovo.

Just like the other Kosovo supporters in international arena, Bulgaria has also supported Kosovo in strengthening its international legitimacy and subjectivity. Bulgaria, just like the other two EU Members States in the region that have recognized Kosovo, decided to neither vote for nor against Serbia's resolution of 8 October 2008 to the UNGA which called for the ICJ to consider the legality of Kosovo's Declaration of Independence, and thus decided to abstain.<sup>324</sup> Bulgaria, on the other hand did not submit any written statement before the ICJ on the first 17 April 2009 deadline nor did it submit any additional comments on the second 24 July 2009 deadline. However, Bulgaria, did provide supportive oral statements during the December 2009 public hearings before the ICJ stating that "International law does not prohibit declarations of independence nor secession, [and that] [t]he declaration of independence did not violate any provision of international law."<sup>325</sup> Bulgaria also attempts to support Kosovo through EU integration mechanisms, i.e. it considers that it is very important for Kosovo to sign the SAA, since this would further enhance relations between the two countries.<sup>326</sup> Given that Bulgaria has recognized Kosovo, it does support the recognition of Kosovo from as many other countries as possible; however, there are no institutional mechanisms between the two countries that would coordinate activities between the two in this regard.<sup>327</sup> Bulgaria also voted in favour of Kosovo's membership in the IMF on 3 May 2009 and the World Bank on 3 June

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<sup>320</sup> Miljan Majhen (Ambassador, Slovenian Embassy in Kosovo), interview in Prishtina, September 24, 2013.

<sup>321</sup> Internal document from MFA.

<sup>322</sup> See the link for further information in the document published by ICJ, accessed December 23, 2013, <http://www.icj-cij.org/docket/files/141/15724.pdf>.

<sup>323</sup> Internal document from MFA.

<sup>324</sup> Internal document from MFA.

<sup>325</sup> See the link for further information in the document published by ICJ, accessed December 23, 2013, <http://www.icj-cij.org/docket/files/141/15718.pdf>.

<sup>326</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>327</sup> Bobi Bobev (Ambassador, Bulgarian Embassy in Kosovo), interview in Prishtina, October 3, 2013.

2009. It is also worth mentioning that in bilateral meetings between the Kosovo and Bulgarian officials, Bulgaria has been committed to assisting Kosovo with the number of recognitions as well as membership in relevant international organisation.<sup>328</sup>

Lastly, the support that Slovenia, Croatia, and Bulgaria provide to the EU facilitated dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia is natural, given that all three of these states are Member States of the EU themselves. So in this regard, they follow EU's lead. Slovenia, just like the case with Albania have appeared initially to have an aligned position with Kosovo in terms of 'no status negotiations' and no 'internal reorganisation issues' red lines, something that has been discussed between Kosovo's and Slovenia's presidents.<sup>329</sup> Also, later on, presidents of both countries, especially President of Slovenia has reiterated that the dialogue process between Kosovo and Serbia, and the dialogue between the EU and Kosovo regarding the latter's accession into the EU are two separate processes and that they should move in parallel.<sup>330</sup> Nonetheless, the negotiations between Kosovo and Serbia turned out to be about 'internal reorganisation' of Kosovo, where the police, judicial sector, the creation of the Association of Serb Municipalities in Kosovo, and some other internal issues are all discussed and agreed upon. Slovenian officials have praised the leadership of both Kosovo and Serbia for understanding the reality on the ground and their bravery to take these issues further.<sup>331</sup> The similar case has been in visits between Kosovo and Croatian high level officials as well as Kosovo and Bulgarian high officials where same points have been mentioned (about the red lines, where preliminary support was gained)<sup>332and333</sup>, but similar outcomes have been praised, regardless of the breach of initially presented and supported red-lines.<sup>334and335</sup>

### 4.3 Intensity of relations with the other EU Member States

#### 4.3.1 Intensity of bilateral relations - Kosovo and Croatia

In terms of the intensity of relations between Kosovo and the EU Member States of the region that have recognized Kosovo, the latter does not enjoy neither very intensive nor intensive relations with neither of them. For instance, Kosovo has only *moderately intensive* bilateral relations with Croatia. This means that from the overall bilateral activity between the two states, expressed in terms of meetings and visits a Presidential, Prime Ministerial, and Foreign Ministerial levels, as well as economic and trade activity, Kosovo's relations with Croatia are less intensive than those between Kosovo and Albania, Turkey, or Macedonia. Ever since the Declaration of Independence in February 2008, around 16 mutual visits and meetings have taken place on both sides of the border. Kosovo has been much more active in paying visits to Croatia in the above mentioned levels than

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<sup>328</sup> "On the first day of his official visit to Bulgaria, Prime Minister Thaçi was received with the highest state honors at the Presidency of the Republic of Bulgaria", accessed January 24, 2014, <http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/?page=2,9,2942>.

<sup>329</sup> "President Jahjaga returned from the official visit to Poland", accessed January 15, 2014, <http://www.president-ksgov.net/?page=2,6,1815>.

<sup>330</sup> "President Atifete Jahjaga was received by the President of Slovenia Danilo Turk", accessed January 15, 2014, <http://www.president-ksgov.net/?page=1,6,1902>

<sup>331</sup> "President Jahjaga nominated Mr. Nasuf Aliu as a member of CEC", accessed January 15, 2014, <http://www.president-ksgov.net/?page=2,6,3027>.

<sup>332</sup> See at <http://www.president-ksgov.net/?page=2,6,1815> and <http://www.president-ksgov.net/?page=2,6,1808>.

<sup>333</sup> Ibid.

<sup>334</sup> "Today, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Kosovo, Hashim Thaci, meets the President of the Republic of Croatia, Ivo Josipovic", accessed January 16, 2014, <http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/?page=2,9,3735>.

<sup>335</sup> "Prime Minister of Kosovo, Hashim Thaci is received by the Prime Minister of Bulgaria, Marin Raykov, and the President of Bulgaria, Rossen Pevneliev", assessed January 16, 2014, <http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/?page=2,9,3532>.

the other way around; actually Kosovo's high level officials have paid as many as three times more visits to Croatia than the other way around.

Within more than five years period (between 17 February 2008 and 30 September 2013), 6 Presidential visits have taken place, of which 4 have taken place in Croatia and 2 in Kosovo. The first official visit to Croatia by a Kosovo President took place on 19 February 2010, when former

Kosovo's intensity of relations with the other EU Member States in the region

State	Points	Intensity
Albania	3.75	Very intensive
Turkey	2.25	Intensive
Macedonia	2.00	Moderately intensive

4	<b>Croatia</b>	<b>2.00</b>	<b>Moderately intensive</b>
5	<b>Slovenia</b>	<b>2.00</b>	<b>Moderately intensive</b>
6	<b>Bulgaria</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>Moderately intensive</b>
	Greece	1.00	Moderately intensive
	Serbia	1.00	Moderately intensive
	Montenegro	0.75	Not active
	B&H	0.50	Not active
	Romania	0.00	Not active

President, Fatmir Sejdiu visited Zagreb on the occasion of opening the Embassy of the Republic of Kosovo to Croatia, a visit which took place around two years after diplomatic relations have been established between the two states.<sup>336</sup> Since then, there have been three other Presidential visits to Croatia, once in every following year. The last visit took place on 1 July 2013, on the occasion of Croatia's accession to the EU. On the other hand there have been only two Presidential visits to Kosovo by Croatia's Presidents, one by Stipe Mesic, on 8 January 2010, and the other one, which was the last one, by Ivo Josipovic, on 6 September 2013.

When it comes to mutual visits at governmental level, there have been five visits and meetings at the Prime Ministerial level and 5 other at Foreign Ministerial level ever since Kosovo declared its independence. However, while Kosovo's Prime Minister, Hashim Thaçi, who still continues to hold the post since 2007, has visited Croatia 4 times, Croatia has conducted only one visit to Kosovo at Prime Ministerial level, when the former Prime Minister of Croatia, Jadranka Kosor, visited Kosovo on 24 August 2011<sup>337</sup>. Similar to visits at Prime Ministerial level, Kosovo has paid more visits to Croatia at Foreign Ministerial level, while Croatia has visited only once at this level, which was as part of a multilateral format on 4 October 2012, on the occasion of the International Women's Summit held in Prishtina.<sup>338</sup> Besides most of these bilateral visits and contacts the high officials of both states have also met in other regional and international forums and gatherings. What is particular about the relations between the two states when the visits and meetings occur, is that, besides the common vision about the Euro-Atlantic future of the region, both parties engage the Albanian community in Croatia and the Croatian community in Kosovo as part of their agenda and conversation in almost all these meetings.

What contributes to moderately intensive relations between the two states is also the trade exchange volume between Kosovo and Croatia. The yearly average trade volume between the two states within the period 2008-2012 was 62.8 million Euros, making Croatia Kosovo's only 8<sup>th</sup> trading partner among the other countries of the region.<sup>339</sup>

<sup>336</sup> "Sejdiu: Croatia has always voiced her strong support for our objectives of freedom and independence", accessed January 19, 2014, <http://www.president-ks.gov.net/?page=2.6.291>.

<sup>337</sup> See at, <http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/?page=1.9>.

<sup>338</sup> See the link for further information on the speech held by President Atifete Jahjaga, accessed January 19, 2014, <http://www.president-ks.gov.net/?page=2.6.2558>.

<sup>339</sup> "Kosovo in Regional Context: Economic and Trade Relations", KIPRED, 29-32.

#### 4.3.2 Intensity of bilateral relations - Kosovo and Slovenia

Bilateral relations between Kosovo and Slovenia are *moderately intensive*, and very similar to those between Kosovo and Croatia; nonetheless, the intensity of relations between Kosovo and Slovenia are fostered more due to economic activity while slightly suffering more on political activity. Accordingly, Kosovo's relations with Slovenia are even less intensive than those between Kosovo and Croatia. Ever since the Declaration of Independence in February 2008, around 16 mutual visits and meetings have taken place on both sides of the border. Just like the activity in its relations with Croatia, Kosovo has been much more active in paying visits to Slovenia than the other way around. Within more than five years period (between 17 February 2008 and 30 September 2013), a total of 10 visits have been paid to Slovenia at Presidential, Prime Ministerial, and Foreign Ministerial levels in total, and 6 visits have been paid to Kosovo by the same high level officials of Slovenia.

Within the same period, only 3 Presidential visits have taken place, of which 1 has taken place in Slovenia and 2 others in Kosovo. The first official visit to Slovenia by a Kosovo President took place on 19 July 2011, when the current President, Atifete Jahjaga visited Slovenia, and this was the first and the last visit to Slovenia by Kosovo's President within these five and a half years. Kosovo's Presidents has, nevertheless, met with Slovenia's Presidents on multilateral settings and international initiatives as well. The first Slovenian President to visit Kosovo was Danilo Turk, who visited Kosovo on 21 December 2009<sup>340</sup>, while the second Presidential visit took place by Borut Pahor on 11 September 2013.<sup>341</sup>

When it comes to governmental visits, a total of 13 mutual meetings have taken place, 5 at Prime Ministerial level, and 8 other at Foreign Ministerial level. Kosovo's Prime Minister has visited Slovenia 4 times, thus being more active in visiting Ljubljana than his counterpart has been in visiting Prishtina. Kosovo's Prime Minister, Hashim Thaçi, visited Slovenia for the first time on 16 April 2009<sup>342</sup>, and his last visit took place on 6 September 2013<sup>343</sup>. On the other hand Slovenian Prime Minister Borut Pahor, the only visit at this level to Kosovo, has visited Kosovo on 8 March 2010.<sup>344</sup> Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Kosovo (Skender Hyseni and Enver Hoxhaj) have visited Slovenia 4 times, the first one was by Minister Hyseni in Slovenia on 20 May 2009<sup>345</sup> and the last one was by Minister Hoxhaj on 26 June 2013.<sup>346</sup> Foreign Ministers of both states have also met in other meetings that took place in multilateral formats. On the other hand, Slovenia's Foreign Ministers have visited Kosovo 3 times, and the first meeting took place on 21 April 2009 by the former

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<sup>340</sup> "Presidenti Sejdiu priti Presidentin e Republikës së Sllovenisë, Danilo Turk", accessed January 15, 2014, <http://www.president-ks.gov.net/?page=1,6,451>.

<sup>341</sup> "Prime Minister of the Republic of Kosovo Hashim Thaçi met President of the Republic of Slovenia Borut Pahor over luncheon", accessed January 15, 2014, <http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/?page=2,9,3750>.

<sup>342</sup> "Prime Minister Hashim Thaçi is welcomed by the Slovenian President, Danilo Turk", accessed January 15, 2014, <http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/?page=2,9,515>.

<sup>343</sup> "Thaçi sonte në Slloveni", accessed January 15, 2014, <http://www.koha.net/arkiva/?page=1,15,68756>

<sup>344</sup> "Kryeministri slloven arrinë për vizitë në Kosovë", accessed January 15, <http://www.mesazhi.com/artikuj/prishtine-kryeministri-sllloven-arrine-per-vizite-ne-kosove>

<sup>345</sup> Minister Hyseni participates in the meeting of Foreign Ministers of states in the Regional Partnership and Western Balkans, accessed January 15, 2014, <http://www.mfa-ks.net/?page=2,4,179&offset=1>

<sup>346</sup> See meeting of Kosovo Minister of Foreign Affairs Enver Hoxhaj with President of Slovenia Borut Pahor, accessed January 15, 2014, <http://www.mfa-ks.net/?page=1,4,1774&offset=2>



Foreign Minister, and the current Head of EU Office in Kosovo, Samuel Zbogar.<sup>347</sup> The last time a Slovenian foreign minister that visited Kosovo was on 18 November 2011<sup>348</sup>.

The character of the meetings between the two states has been friendly with the aim to strengthen bilateral relations and achieving their respective regional policy objective. On the one hand Slovenian officials almost in every meeting have reassured Kosovo for the support Slovenia will provide on regional and international integration, and provide technical support on EU integration process. On the other hand, Kosovo officials almost in all the occasion have expressed their aims for Euro-Atlantic integration and the support Slovenia could provide regarding visa liberalisation, which Slovenia was ready to provide, something that can already be witnessed by mutual cooperation that is ongoing between the respective ministries of Public Administration, Internal Affairs, and Defence/Security.<sup>349</sup> Given that Slovenia is one of the regional top investors in Kosovo, one of the other important issues that has been treated in all these meetings is fostering cooperation in economic sector.<sup>350</sup> Contrary to high Slovenian investments in Kosovo, trade volume between the two countries is not very plausible, whereby with a yearly average of 71 million Euros between 2008-2012, Slovenia is ranked as Kosovo's 7<sup>th</sup> trading partner in the region.<sup>351</sup>

#### 4.3.3 Intensity of bilateral relations - Kosovo and Bulgaria

Bilateral relations between Kosovo and Bulgaria are *moderately intensive*, and are slightly less intensive compared to Kosovo's relations with the other EU Member States of the region (Croatia and Slovenia) that have recognized Kosovo. Bulgaria scores less in its intensity of bilateral relations with Kosovo in both fronts, political (due to less bilateral visits and meetings), and economic (due to lower trade volume) between the two states, compared to the other countries in the region that have scored higher in terms of intensity of bilateral relations. Ever since the Declaration of Independence in February 2008, around 6 mutual visits and meetings have taken place on both sides of the border. Just like the activity in its relations with Croatia and Slovenia, Kosovo has been much more active in paying visits to Bulgaria than the other way around; actually, Kosovo has been twice as more active in this regard. Within more than five years period (between 17 February 2008 and 30 September 2013), a total of 4 visits have been paid to Bulgaria at Presidential, Prime Ministerial, and Foreign Ministerial levels in total, and 2 visits have been paid to Kosovo by the same high level officials of Bulgaria.

Within the same period, only 1 Presidential visit has taken place, which was a visit by Kosovo's President, Atifete Jahjaga, to Bulgaria on 25 September 2012, around four years after the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two states.<sup>352</sup> On the other hand, none of Bulgaria's President, neither the former President Georgi Parvanov, nor the current one Rosen Plevneliev, have ever visited Kosovo.

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<sup>347</sup> Minister Hyseni and the Foreign Minister of Slovenia sign bilateral Cooperation Agreement, accessed January 15, 2014, <http://www.mfa-ks.net/?page=2,4,172&offset=1>.

<sup>348</sup> Prime Minister Thaçi met today with, Mr. Samuel Zbogar, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Slovenia, accessed January 15, 2014, <http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/?page=2,9,2491>

<sup>349</sup> Miljan Majhen (Ambassador, Slovenian Embassy in Kosovo), interview in Prishtina, September 24, 2013.

<sup>350</sup> "Slovenia a regional and european partner of Kosovo", accessed January 21, 2014, <http://www.ambasada-ks.net/si/?page=1,8,75>.

<sup>351</sup> "Kosovo in Regional Context: Economic and Trade Relations", KIPRED, 29-32.

<sup>352</sup> President Jahjaga met with the President of Bulgaria, Mr. Rosen Plevneliev, <http://www.president-ks.gov.net/?page=2,6,2538>.

When it comes to visits and meetings at governmental level, a total of only 5 visits took place, of which 2 have taken place at Prime Ministerial level, and 3 others at Foreign Ministerial level. All the two visits at Prime Ministerial level took place in Bulgaria by the current Prime Minister of Kosovo, Hashim Thaçi, who has visited Bulgaria for the first time on 18 June 2012, more than four years after the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two states, and the second time on 15 May 2013. On the other hand, there has been no visits by a Bulgarian Prime Minister in Kosovo yet, ever since the Declaration of Independence. The foreign ministers of both states have met only three times within this period of more than 5 and a half years; two of the visits took place in Kosovo by Bulgarian Foreign Minister (in 2010 and 2011), and the other one took place on 27 June 2011 by Kosovo's Foreign minister, in which occasion two bilateral agreements were signed: The Agreement for Cooperation between the two Ministries and the Agreement for International Transport of goods and passengers.<sup>353</sup>

The character of these meetings was to a large extent similar to the character of the meetings Kosovo officials had with Slovenian officials. This is more due to the fact that both countries are EU member States and share more of their regional policies than not. Accordingly, the meetings and visits have been focused on the common vision that the region of the Western Balkans, including Kosovo, should be integrated into the EU, which is important for regional stability. Just like the case with Slovenia, Kosovo officials have asked Bulgarian officials to assist Kosovo in visa liberalisation process, as well as in other areas of European integration process, given Bulgaria's experience in this regard.<sup>354</sup> The intensity of relations between Kosovo and Bulgaria also suffers slightly due to the lack of economic activity, or more specifically, trade exchange between the two states, compared to the trade exchange that Kosovo enjoys with its neighbouring and other regional countries. Kosovo's average yearly trade volume between 2008-2012 with Bulgaria was 47.5 million Euros, making Bulgaria Kosovo's 9<sup>th</sup> trading partner only in the region.<sup>355</sup> Trade relations between Kosovo and Bulgaria are not satisfactory for Bulgarian officials, and when one observes the trade volume between Kosovo and Macedonia, which are understandably traditional, it is evident that there can be more space for trade cooperation and increase in trade intensity between the two states.<sup>356</sup> However, both countries are committed on the efforts to increase further the cooperation in the future.<sup>357</sup>

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<sup>353</sup> Two Cooperation Agreements between Kosovo and Bulgaria are signed, <http://www.mfa-ks.net/?page=2,4,826&offset=1>.

<sup>354</sup> "President Jahjaga met with the President of Bulgaria, Mr. Rosen Plevneliev", accessed January 24, 2014, <http://www.president-ks.gov.net/?page=1,6,2538>.

<sup>355</sup> "Kosovo in Regional Context: Economic and Trade Relations", KIPRED, 29-32.

<sup>356</sup> Bobi Bobev (Ambassador, Bulgarian Embassy in Kosovo), interview in Prishtina, October 3, 2013.

<sup>357</sup> Ibid.

## 5 KOSOVO AND TURKEY

### 5.1 Foreign and regional policy

The Western Balkans as a region plays an important role in Turkey's regional policy. Turkey keeps the region of the Western Balkans as a priority, not only because of the political, economic, and geographic perspective and interests, but also because of the region's historical cultural ties with Turkey.<sup>358</sup> The entire South-eastern Europe also plays an important role for Turkey, because it views it as a geographical connection with the rest of Europe, and as such, Turkey attaches great importance to strengthening and keeping good bilateral relations with all the states of the region and the Western Balkans in particular.<sup>359</sup> Another reason why Turkey considers the Balkans to be important is because there are a lot of Turkish minorities and communities that are part of almost every state in the Balkans, and there are a lot of Balkan-origin citizens living in Turkey.<sup>360</sup> Given that achieving regional stability and security is important for Turkey, it considers the international presence in Kosovo and BiH as necessary to keep this stability and is a party in various regional initiatives where it plays a key role.<sup>361</sup>

Turkey's foreign policy objectives in general are similar to those of the states of the Western Balkans, among which, the most important one is to become a full member of the European Union.<sup>362</sup> Given that Turkey is already a key NATO Member State, its foreign policy objective in this regard is to contribute in further NATO enlargement through which it can achieve regional security and global peace. Similarly to the other states of the region, Turkey aims at further strengthening its bilateral relations with the US and the individual Member States of the EU. In terms of regions, Turkey wants to strengthen its relations with the Western Balkans, the Middle East, North Africa, Southern Caucasus, South Asia, and Central Asia.<sup>363</sup>

### 5.2 Quality of relations with Turkey

Bilateral relations between Kosovo and Turkey are *excellent*. Actually, the current Turkish Ambassador to Kosovo, Songül Ozan, besides defining bilateral relations between the two states as excellent, she believes the relations are "special", and that for Turkey, Kosovo "is a magic key that one uses in Turkey to open a lot of doors".<sup>364</sup> In terms of quality of relations, Kosovo has slightly better relations with Turkey than with Albania, where both of these states score the same in almost all fundamental aspects in their bilateral relations, except that Turkey scores much higher in terms of investments in Kosovo; thus making it a state in the region with which Kosovo enjoys best relations with. First, just like Albania, Turkey is one of the first countries in the region that has recognized Kosovo; it has deposited its recognition on 18 February 2008, immediately one day after Kosovo had declared it.<sup>365</sup> Diplomatic relations and relations at ambassadorial level between the two states

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<sup>358</sup> "Foreign Policy – Balkans", Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, accessed December 15, 2013, <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/sub.en.mfa?91541430-f1dd-41d0-b6eb-e1a6cc3e556b>.

<sup>359</sup> Ibid.

<sup>360</sup> Ibid.

<sup>361</sup> Ibid.

<sup>362</sup> "Synopsis of the Turkish Foreign Policy", MFA Turkey.

<sup>363</sup> Ibid.

<sup>364</sup> High Turkish political official, interview in Prishtina, October 7, 2013.

<sup>365</sup> See the countries that have recognized Kosovo, accessed December 15, 2013, <http://www.kosovothankyou.com/>.

were established on the same day of recognition, just like the case with Albania.<sup>366</sup> Turkey appointed its first Ambassador to Prishtina (Metin Hüsrev Ünler) on 21 April 2009, more than a year after diplomatic relations were established, and since then, Turkey maintained uninterrupted diplomatic representation at Ambassadorial level for the most part. After Mr. Ünler's service ended in December 2011, Turkey immediately appointed its next Ambassador to Kosovo (Songül Ozan) in January 2011, who still continues to serve. Even prior to establishing its Embassy, Turkey had been operating in Kosovo through its Liaison Office in Prishtina since 1999<sup>367</sup>, in which Mr. Mustafa Sarnıç served as the Head of Office from 2007 until 31 October 2008.<sup>368</sup> On the other hand, just like with any other country of the region, Kosovo appointed its first Ambassador to Ankara after Turkey appointed its Ambassador to Prishtina. The first Kosovo's Ambassador to Turkey (Bekim Sejdiu) was appointed on 9 September 2009, around 5 months after Turkey has done so, and a year and a half after the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two states.<sup>369</sup>

Second, Turkey also ranks first in the region with the number of bilateral agreements that both states have signed, 21 in total.<sup>370</sup> Most of the agreements are related to economic cooperation, although agreements of other nature have been signed as well. The latest agreement that was signed between the two states is the Free Trade Agreement (27 September 2013), the negotiations for which began in September 2012. In accordance with this Agreement, Turkey will eliminate customs duties on all industrial goods and on 850 tariff lines regarding agricultural goods of Kosovo origin upon the entry into force. Kosovo, on the other hand, will eliminate the customs duties on all industrial goods and 846 tariff lines regarding agricultural goods of Turkish origin, incrementally in 9 years until all the tariffs are abolished completely.<sup>371</sup> Additionally, Turkey belongs to the group of states in the region that does not apply barriers to entry to Kosovo citizens. Before and shortly after the Declaration of Independence, the Kosovo citizens needed to have either a visa that had to be stamped at the Turkish Liaison Office in Prishtina (UNMIK Passports), or it could have been taken at the border (for Serbian Passports). Nonetheless, Turkey decided to abolish all the entry barriers for the new Republic of Kosovo passports, and since 2009, Kosovo citizens can travel freely to Turkey. Same applies for the Turkish citizens visiting Kosovo - no barriers to entry are applied.

Kosovo's quality of relations with Turkey

	State	Points	Quality
1	Turkey	4.00	Excellent
	Albania	3.88	Excellent
	Slovenia	3.25	Very Good
	Macedonia	3.13	Very Good
	Croatia	2.63	Good
	Bulgaria	2.75	Good
	Montenegro	1.88	Fair
	Serbia	0.75	Poor
	Greece	0.25	Poor
	Romania	0.13	Poor
	B&H	0.00	Poor

Lastly, Turkey tops the list of investors in Kosovo, and ranks second in the entire region after Slovenia. The yearly average investments of Turkey to Kosovo between 2008-2012 exceeded 28.6

<sup>366</sup> MFA internal document.

<sup>367</sup> "Relations between Turkey and Kosovo", Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, accessed December 15, 2013, [http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-kosovo\\_en.mfa](http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-kosovo_en.mfa).

<sup>368</sup> See at, <http://arama.hurriyet.com.tr/arsivnews.aspx?id=-633279>.

<sup>369</sup> "Embassy History and Previous Ambassadors", Embassy of Turkey in Kosovo, accessed December 16, 2013, <http://pristine.be.mfa.gov.tr/MissionChiefHistory.aspx>.

<sup>370</sup> International Agreements, Official Gazette of the Republic of Kosovo.

<sup>371</sup> "Turkey-Kosovo Free Trade Agreement", Ministry of Economy of Turkey, accessed January 19, 2014, <http://www.economy.gov.tr/index.cfm?sayfa=5202262F-CC62-D405-56667423C11AA54B>.

million Euros.<sup>372</sup> Also, besides diplomatic and business presence in Kosovo, Turkey is also one of the countries in the region that maintains troops and personnel in KFOR and EULEX. Turkey maintains a total of 394 troops in KFOR<sup>373</sup>, the highest number compared to all the other states of the region, and 28 personnel in EULEX.

### 5.3 Turkey in Kosovo's international subjectivity

Excellent relations between Kosovo and Turkey are further enriched by the fact that Turkey strongly supports Kosovo's international subjectivity and is actively involved in strengthening it. Turkey, like many other countries of the region, for instance, has abstained on Serbia's UNGA 8 October 2008 Resolution that called the ICJ to provide an opinion regarding the legality of Kosovo's Declaration of Independence.<sup>374</sup> Surprisingly, Turkey's approach to the 9 October 2009 UNGA Resolution, and the written statements on 17 April 2009 and additional statements on 24 July 2009, which Turkey did not submit, compare, and actually are identical to BiH's approach in all these cases. Also, just like BiH, Turkey has not made any oral statement during the public hearing before the ICJ, held during December 2009. However, it did support Kosovo by voting for its membership in the IMF on 3 May 2009, and for its membership in the World Bank on 3 June 2009.

Turkey along with Albania has been one of the most important lobbyist for Kosovo's independence, recognition, and international legitimacy. This further adds into the excellent quality of bilateral relations that both states enjoy. In almost every single visit Turkey makes outside, its officials keep Kosovo's recognitions in the agenda.<sup>375</sup> The latest examples of Turkey's direct involvement on lobbying for Kosovo's recognitions is the important role Turkey's Prime Minister has played on getting recognitions from Pakistan and Egypt.<sup>376</sup> For instance, when Pakistan decided to recognize Kosovo, it has informed the Kosovo officials through Ankara on their decision to recognize Kosovo, since they did not have any contacts in Kosovo.<sup>377</sup> Also, Brunei submitted their decision on Kosovo's recognition on 25 April 2012 - as soon as its King came back home from a visit to Ankara.<sup>378</sup>

Turkey is one of the few countries in the region and even wider that has some sort of institutional coordination when it comes to lobbying for recognitions or Kosovo's international legitimacy.<sup>379</sup> Additionally, Turkey has put its own diplomatic service at Kosovo's disposal; meaning, that all the Embassies Turkey has, are at Kosovo's disposal without any condition, as if they were Kosovo's premises and services, which could be used not only for Kosovo officials but for its citizens as well.<sup>380</sup> In line with this, Turkey's Foreign Ministry, for instance, in coordination with Kosovo's authorities, has offered to assist Kosovo citizens trapped in the Middle Eastern and North African countries during the Arab Spring.<sup>381</sup> Finally, Turkey continues to support Kosovo's efforts to

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<sup>372</sup> "Kosovo in Regional Context: Economic and Trade Relations", KIPRED, 20-24.

<sup>373</sup> "Troop Numbers & Contribution Nations", NATO, accessed December 22, 2013, <http://www.aco.nato.int/kfor/about-us/troop-numbers-contributions.aspx>.

<sup>374</sup> MFA internal document.

<sup>375</sup> Erdogan mentions Kosovo in 66<sup>th</sup> UN Assembly speech <http://www.voltairenet.org/article171548.html>.

<sup>376</sup> Avni Spahiu (Ambassador, Kosovo Embassy in Turkey), E-mail communication, October 3, 2013.

<sup>377</sup> High Turkish political official, interview in Prishtina, October 7, 2013.

<sup>378</sup> Ibid.

<sup>379</sup> Ibid.

<sup>380</sup> Ibid.

<sup>381</sup> Ibid.

strengthen its international legitimacy by increasing recognitions and by gaining membership in international organisation, especially with the Islamic states as well as other multilateral organisations such as the Development and Southeast European Cooperative Initiative.<sup>382</sup>

Lastly, just like most of the countries in the region, Turkey supports the dialogue with Serbia, where both parties in the dialogue keep the same aim for European integration but entered the dialogue to achieve opposing outcomes in regards to how Kosovo shall be viewed in the future. Just like Albania, Turkey has mostly offered rhetorical support in line with other EU Member States. In various meeting with Turkish officials before the dialogue commenced, the former President of Kosovo, Fatmir Sejdiu, has assured the Turkish officials that Kosovo shall never discuss internal issues and its territorial integrity shall remain intact.<sup>383</sup> Even the former acting President of Kosovo, Jakup Krasniqi, in a friendly meeting with the Turkish Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, has stated, few months before the dialogue started, that Turkey can offer a great support to the dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia and thus ensure regional peace and stability due to its huge political and economic potential.<sup>384</sup> When the dialogue had begun, Turkey has offered rhetorical support to Kosovo, and praised the First Agreement of Principles for normalisation of relations between Kosovo and Serbia, besides that it turned up to be about Kosovo's internal issues and rearrangement.<sup>385and386</sup>

#### 5.4 Intensity of relations with Turkey

Kosovo and Turkey have *intensive* relations, ranking only after Albania. These intensive relations derive from the overall bilateral activity between Kosovo and Turkey in terms of meetings and visits on Presidential, Prime Ministerial, and Foreign Ministerial levels, as well as economic and trade activity between the two states. Ever since the Declaration of independence in February 2008, around 14 mutual visits and meetings have taken place on both sides of the border, which is three times as less as the frequency of meetings and visits that Kosovo has had with Albania. Of all the visits between Kosovo and Turkey, 9 have taken place in Turkey and the other 5 in Kosovo, making Kosovo much more active on paying visits to Turkey than the other way around. For instance, when it comes to visits at Presidential level, there were 4 meetings that took place, and all four of them have taken place in Turkey, making the latter one of the few countries of the region with which Kosovo enjoys more intensive relations and whose President has not visited Kosovo. The former President of Kosovo, Fatmir Sejdiu, has visited Turkey twice, once on 6 May 2009<sup>387</sup> and once on 2 February 2010;<sup>388</sup> and similarly, the current President of Kosovo, Atifete Jahjaga, has also visited Turkey twice, once on 12 March 2012<sup>389</sup>, and once on 11 April 2013<sup>390</sup>, thus establishing a trend of a

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<sup>382</sup> Avni Spahiu (Ambassador, Kosovo Embassy in Turkey), E-mail communication, October 3, 2013.

<sup>383</sup> Sejdiu statement in meetings with several Turkish officials, accessed January 20, 2014, <http://www.president-ksgov.net/?page=1.6.1103>.

<sup>384</sup> The acting President of of the Republic of Kosovo Dr. Jakup Krasniqi receives the Prime Minister of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan", accessed January 20, 2014, <http://www.president-ksgov.net/?page=2.6.1429>.

<sup>385</sup> "President Atifete Jahjaga met with the Turkish Foreign Minister, Mr. Ahmet Davutoglu", accessed January 20, 2014, <http://www.president-ksgov.net/?page=1.6.2744>.

<sup>386</sup> "Prime Minister Thaci received by Prime Minister of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, accessed January 20, 2014, <http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/?page=2.9.3527>.

<sup>387</sup> "President of Turkey Abdullah Gul reconfirms support for Kosovo", accessed January 20, 2014, <http://www.president-ksgov.net/?page=1.6.688>.

<sup>388</sup> "Republic of Turkey receives President Sejdiu with highest state honors", accessed January 20, 2014, <http://www.president-ksgov.net/?page=2.6.523>.

<sup>389</sup> "President Jahjaga met with the President of Turkey, Abdullah Gul", accessed January 21, 2014, <http://www.president-ksgov.net/?page=1.6.2234>.

Presidential visit almost once in each year. Meetings at Presidential level between the two states have also taken place in multilateral settings, especially in New York, at UN meetings and other conferences abroad. Abdullah Gül, the only President that has held the post ever since Kosovo's Declaration of Independence has never visited Kosovo.

Meetings and visits at governmental level have taken place more frequently, 10 in total, of which 5 at Prime Ministerial level and 5 others at Foreign Ministerial level. Kosovo's Prime Minister, Hashim Thaçi, the only one who has held the post since Kosovo's independence, has visited Turkey three times, while his counterpart, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, has visited Kosovo only once officially. Mr.

Kosovo's intensity of relations with Turkey

State	Points	Intensity
Albania	3.75	Very intensive
<b>2 Turkey</b>	<b>2.25</b>	<b>Intensive</b>
Macedonia	2.00	Moderately intensive
Croatia	2.00	Moderately intensive
Slovenia	2.00	Moderately intensive
Bulgaria	1.00	Moderately intensive
Greece	1.00	Moderately intensive
Serbia	1.00	Moderately intensive
Montenegro	0.75	Not active
B&H	0.50	Not active
Romania	0.00	Not active

Thaçi first visited Turkey on 20 May 2010<sup>391</sup>, more than two years after the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two states. His second visit took place on 14 March 2011<sup>392</sup> and the third and last one on 10 May 2013<sup>393</sup>. On the other hand Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan has visited Kosovo twice, once on 3 November 2010 in Prishtina and Prizren,<sup>394</sup> and the second time was on 23 October 2013<sup>395</sup>. Mr. Erdogan enjoys a very good reputation in Kosovo, especially among the Turkish community and traditionally conservative part of the society in Kosovo. Mr. Erdogan has been reported to have visited Kosovo unofficially much more frequently where he meets with Turkish community and their

representatives in Prizren.<sup>396</sup> The two official visits by Erdogan to Prishtina and Prizren, however, the first one in November 2010 and the second and last one in October 2013, are considered controversial because of the implicit message he has managed to send through these visits in support of Kosovo's current government set-up of Prime Minister Thaçi. This is the case because both visits coincided with election campaigns in Kosovo. Given Mr. Erdogan's popularity in Kosovo, it is assumed that he is implicitly helping Thaçi gain support among the Turkish community in Kosovo.<sup>397</sup> This, however, has been denied by Turkish representatives in Kosovo as mere coincidence.<sup>398</sup>

There have been five additional visits and mutual meetings between Foreign Ministers of both states. Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Kosovo (Skender Hyseni and Enver Hoxhaj) have visited Turkey two times, the first one was by Minister Hyseni on 28 August 2009<sup>399</sup> and the last one was by Minister

<sup>390</sup> "President Jahjaga meets representatives of Albanian community in Turkey", accessed January 21, 2014, <http://www.president-ks.gov.net/?page=1.6.2835>.

<sup>391</sup> "Prime Minister receives full support from Prime Minister Erdogan of Turkey", accessed January 21, 2014, <http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/?page=2.9.1323>.

<sup>392</sup> "Prime Minister of Republic of Kosovo Hashim Thaci meets Prime Minister of Republic of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan", accessed January 21, 2014, <http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/?page=2.9.1888>.

<sup>393</sup> "Prime Minister Thaci received by Prime Minister of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdogan", accessed January 21, 2014, <http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/?page=2.9.3527>.

<sup>394</sup> "Prime Minister Hashim Thaci: Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan was amongst the biggest supporters of our country's independence", accessed January 21, 2014, <http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/?page=2.9.1715>.

<sup>395</sup> "Erdogan visits, Kosovo", accessed December 3, 2013, <http://ilirida.net/lajme/33144-erdogan-vizitoi-kosoven-pershendet-shqiptaret-e-maqedonise.html>.

<sup>396</sup> KIPRED various encounters in interviews.

<sup>397</sup> <http://english.sabah.com.tr/national/2013/10/24/pm-erdogan-kosovo-is-turkey>.

<sup>398</sup> High Turkish political official, interview in Prishtina, October 7, 2013.

<sup>399</sup> "Minister Hyseni meets President Abdullah Gul", accessed January 22, 2014, <http://www.mfa-ks.net/?page=2.4.213&offset=1>.

Hoxhaj on 18 December 2012.<sup>400</sup> Other meetings by Kosovo Foreign Ministers were held in multilateral formats elsewhere as well as in international conferences. On the other hand, Turkish Foreign Ministers have visited Kosovo three times, the first one took place on 20 December 2008<sup>401</sup>, the second visit in Kosovo on 13 January 2010<sup>402</sup>, and the last visit on 26 August 2011<sup>403</sup>, making meetings at Foreign Ministerial level to be as frequent as once a year.

The common topics discussed between the parties at all the above mentioned levels are of economic, political, and cultural character. Both sides continuously emphasize the need for strong political and economic relations and the necessity to further deepen the partnership. Lobbying activities in support for Kosovo's international legitimacy, not only through chasing recognitions but also through the support that Turkey can provide in its area of influence among the Islamic states are also discussed and coordinated.<sup>404</sup> The former President of Kosovo, Fatmir Sajdiu has asked the Turkish officials for the support they could provide on Kosovo's future membership in the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the League of Arab States.<sup>405</sup> Turkey is one of the few countries in the region that provides most of the possible space it could provide to Kosovo, in terms of its participation in forums and almost all the international events it organizes on its soil and thus provides Kosovo with unprecedented support.<sup>406</sup>

Most of these high official meetings, including Presidential and Prime Ministerial have also been characterized with the discussion in the education sector, or more specifically the alleged pressure that the Turkish high officials have put on Kosovo's officials to review history books where the Ottomans and the Turks are portrayed negatively.<sup>407</sup> This has opened up heated discussions in Prishtina which continue for years now, especially among the historians and other public figures who are against Turkey's demands to "rehabilitate" Ottomans in Kosovo's history books.<sup>408</sup> Nevertheless, the Turkish high officials at the Embassy in Prishtina claim that the initial idea to review and modify parts of the history books used in Kosovo's education system was given by the former Kosovo's Minister of Education and the current Kosovo's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Enver Hoxhaj, and that Turkish officials have just followed suit.<sup>409</sup> Pressure is reported to be applied on Kosovo's officials, as some of them have claimed to have come not only from Turkey's President, Prime Minister, and Foreign Minister, but also from the Ambassador of Turkey to Kosovo herself.<sup>410</sup> Besides the heated discussion and the controversy over the issue, Turkey has not conditioned Kosovo to do so, and continues to assist and support Kosovo in its statehood endeavours.

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<sup>400</sup> "Hoxhaj: Turkey our strategic partner", accessed January 22, 2014, <http://www.mfa-ks.net/?page=1,4,1546&offset=1>.

<sup>401</sup> See the link for further information, accessed January 22, 2014, <http://www.president-ks.gov.net/?page=1,6,844>.

<sup>402</sup> "Minister Hyseni met with Foreign Affairs Minister of Republic of Turkey, Ali Babacan", accessed January 22, 2014, <http://www.mfa-ks.net/?page=2,4,120&offset=2>.

<sup>403</sup> "Prime Minister Thaçi: All the countries in the region aspire EU integration – and to achieve that they have to respect territorial integrity of neighboring countries", accessed January 22, 2014, <http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/?page=2,9,2290>.

<sup>404</sup> "Prime Minister Hashim Thaçi: Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan was amongst the biggest supporters of our country's independence", accessed January 21, 2014, <http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/?page=2,9,1715>.

<sup>405</sup> "Republic of Turkey reconfirms the support for Kosovo", accessed January 23, 2014, <http://www.president-ks.gov.net/?page=1,6,232>.

<sup>406</sup> "President of Turkey Abdullah Gul reconfirms support for Kosovo", accessed January 20, 2014, <http://www.president-ks.gov.net/?page=1,6,688>.

<sup>407</sup> "Ndryshimi i Historisë zbut Perandorinë Osmane", accessed January 21, 2014, <http://gazetajnk.com/?cid=1,964,4133>.

<sup>408</sup> Turqia kërkon të "rehabilitojë" osmanët në historinë e Kosovës, accessed January 21, 2014, <http://www.shqiptaria.com/kosova/2727/turqia-kerkon-te-rehabilitoje-osmanet-ne-historine-e-kosoves-149245.html>.

<sup>409</sup> High Turkish political official, interview in Prishtina, October 7, 2013.

<sup>410</sup> Turqia kërkon të "rehabilitojë" osmanët në historinë e Kosovës, accessed January 21, 2014, <http://www.shqiptaria.com/kosova/2727/turqia-kerkon-te-rehabilitoje-osmanet-ne-historine-e-kosoves-149245.html>.



Lastly, besides that the Kosovo officials have been more active in meeting Serbian officials than the Turkish ones, the intensity of relations between the two countries remains strong, mostly because of trade exchange volume between the two states. The yearly average trade volume between 2008-2012 between Kosovo and Turkey was around 168.6 million Euros, making Turkey Kosovo's 3rd trading partner in the region, after Macedonia and Serbia.<sup>411</sup>

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<sup>411</sup> Publications for external trade, Office of the Prime Minister, Kosovo Agency of Statistics, accessed January 20, 2014, [http://esk.rks-gov.net/publikimet/cat\\_view/14-tregtia-e-jashtme](http://esk.rks-gov.net/publikimet/cat_view/14-tregtia-e-jashtme).

## 6 GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

- Turkey ranks first among the states of the region, which Kosovo enjoys the best relations with in terms of quality of bilateral relations. Albania follows immediately second after Turkey. Taking into account its geographic size, position, and influence, Turkey has been much more influential in assisting Kosovo in lobbying for its recognitions as well as strengthen its international legitimacy. Compared to Albania, Turkey also is a much stronger investor in Kosovo. On the other hand, Albania is the only country in the region that Kosovo enjoys very intensive relations with, and thus ranks first, in terms of the intensity of bilateral relations between the two states.
- Relations/contacts with the non-recognizing states of the region are all poor. While Greece and Romania maintain 'diplomatic' presence in Kosovo through their Liaison Offices, Serbia is the only non-recognizer in the region that not only has a 'diplomatic' representation through its Liaison Officer, but has also allowed Kosovo to have the same representation in Belgrade. Kosovo still does not have 'diplomatic' representation through a Liaison Office in the other non-recognizers, besides the fact that Greece has not denied Kosovo to do so, for instance. What also contributes to Serbia to rank higher than the other non-recognizers in the region in terms of quality of relations/contacts, is the investments that Serbia has made in Kosovo, which although low compared to the region, they are higher compared to the other non-recognizers. Serbia also ranks 8<sup>th</sup> among all the states in the region when it comes to the intensity of bilateral/relations. Unlike with the other non-recognizers, which Kosovo has no active relations with, Serbia has maintained active political relations/contacts with Kosovo on multilateral level, but such relations at bilateral level are inexistent. Trade exchange is something that contributes to the current level of intensity between Kosovo and Serbia. Kosovo's trade volume with Serbia is much higher than with any other state in the region, ranking only after Macedonia.
- When it comes to the EU Member States of the region that have recognized Kosovo, Slovenia ranks first among them in terms of the quality of relations they enjoy with Kosovo. Slovenia actually ranks the third in the entire region in terms of quality of relations it enjoys with Kosovo; it ranks immediately after Turkey and Albania.
- What contributes to the better quality (and in some cases better than one would initially assume) of relations between Kosovo and Albania, Turkey, and Serbia for instance, is that these states, together with Montenegro and Macedonia are the only ones in the region that do not apply barriers to entry (such as visas) to Kosovo citizens.
- The most supportive countries in the region in strengthening Kosovo's international legitimacy have been Albania, Turkey, and Slovenia. Others like Croatia and Bulgaria have also been supportive, but not to the extent the first three have. Macedonia and Montenegro are the only recognizers in the region that have remained neutral in their approach to helping Kosovo strengthen its international legitimacy. This is partly due to their close relations with Serbia, and recognition of Kosovo is considered by them an enough of a blow to Serbia on their part.

- Serbia is staunchest challenger of Kosovo's international legitimacy. It takes every step it can and it must to challenge Kosovo international subjectivity and representation. Serbia has used all the legal (UN, ICJ, etc) and practical (lobbying) it could to stop Kosovo gain more recognitions. Romania has supported Serbia in almost all its endeavours to challenge Kosovo's international legitimacy. BiH has remained more passive in this regard due to internal divisions among the Bosnia and Croats representatives of the Presidency (who support Kosovo's independence) on the one hand and Serb representatives of the Presidency (who challenge Kosovo's independence) on the other hand. Greece is the only non-recognizer in the region that has taken a more inclusive or non-isolationist approach towards Kosovo. It has called Kosovo to open its Liaison Office in Athens, and has also been open to meeting Kosovo high officials in both Prishtina and Athens, unlike the other non-recognizers.

## 7 ANNEX

### Annex 1: Kosovo in Region's Foreign Policy

Kosovo in Region's Foreign Policy	
States	Kosovo's standing
Albania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Kosovo and Albania have no open issues and Kosovo stands among the so-called main axes of Albania's foreign policy. Albania considers the cooperation with Kosovo as strategic in function of the economic growth, the quality of life and the acceleration of the Euro- Atlantic integration process and in building a common Euro- Atlantic future.</li> <li>•Albania strongly supports Kosovo's independence and commits to continue undertaking steps to help the process of further recognitions of Kosovo in the international arena. Furthermore Albania welcomes Kosovo's steps towards the European Union processes.</li> <li>•Albania has welcomed and supported the dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia and all agreements / conclusions reached including the Agreement of April 19th that Albania expects to give a new impetus to new recognitions of Kosovo and its membership into regional fora, the EU and the UN.</li> </ul>
Turkey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•In Turkey's foreign Policy framework is stated that Turkey and Kosovo have excellent bilateral relations stemming from shared history and brotherhood ties. Furthermore, that Turkey attaches utmost importance to preserving the stability and territorial integrity of Kosovo and to establish constructive relations with its neighbors on the basis of friendship. Turkey supports Kosovo's development and its integration with Euro-Atlantic structures as well. In this regard, Turkey continues to provide support to Kosovo in political, military, humanitarian and economic spheres.</li> <li>•Turkey is committed to continue supporting Kosovo's quest for further international recognitions as well as membership in international organizations. Turkey supports the dialogue process between Pristina-Belgrade and sees it as an important factor facilitating the progress of Serbia and Kosovo towards their goal of EU integration and an important instrument in the normalization of relations between two neighboring states.</li> <li>•Turkey perceives the Kosovo citizens of Turkish origin, whose number is around 19 thousand, an important bridge between the two countries whom are contributing actively to the political, economic, cultural and social spheres in Kosovo.</li> <li>•Turkey has been contributing to the protection of common cultural heritage in Kosovo through Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency, which has completed restoration of many monuments such as Sultan Murat Tomb, Fatih Mosque and Sinan Pasha Mosque.</li> </ul>
Macedonia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•With the completion of border demarcation in 2009 Kosovo and Macedonia have no open issues. The relations with Kosovo are not emphasized in the Goals and Priorities of Macedonia's Policy whereas these relations fall within the relations with the countries Macedonia's refers to as "the immediate neighbourhood". In this regard, the promotion is made of good-neighbourliness and friendship, and so of preparedness for overall cooperation in several fields of common interest. Good-neighbourly relations are one of the priorities in the foreign policy of Macedonia.</li> <li>•Macedonia aims to build comprehensive cooperation ties with all countries in the immediate and wider neighbourhood – at both bilateral level, and within regional initiatives and projects by taking part in the existing initiatives of regional cooperation in the entire region of South East Europe – as an active contribution by the Republic of Macedonia in building relations of security, stability, and cooperation in South East Europe.</li> <li>•In addition of the Republic of Macedonia participation in peacekeeping missions (UN, NATO, EU) it is mentioned among other countries also the logistical support to KFOR in Kosovo.</li> </ul>
Serbia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Serbia does not recognize Kosovo as an independent country whereas Kosovo is embodied in Serbia's Constitution.</li> <li>•Moreover, in its foreign policy main objectives in the field of multilateral activities is included the protection of sovereignty and territorial integrity of the R. of Serbia and finding a compromise solution regarding Kosovo and Metohija by winning the broadest possible support to the positions of the R. of Serbia at multilateral gatherings.</li> </ul>
BeH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•B&amp;H does not recognize Kosovo as an independent country. Therefore, in its basic directions and activities of BiH foreign policy of bilateral character Kosovo is not ranked among the neighbouring countries, with whom BiH aims the promotion of cooperation.</li> </ul>

<b>Montenegro</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Montenegro is one of the countries in the region with whom Kosovo has some open issues. This include the Border Demarcation as well as the recognition of Montenegrins as a Community with all the Constitutional and equal rights with other communities in Kosovo.</li> <li>In the foreign-policy priorities of Montenegro Kosovo falls in the category labelled “Improving and maintaining good neighbourly relations and regional cooperation”. However, due to the lack of border demarcation Kosovo is not mentioned among its neighbouring countries with whom Montenegro states to share the same geographical space and also the same foreign policy goals.</li> <li>•Montenegro’s foreign policy goal is to develop good relations and communications with mutual respect and continuous development of political, economic, security, cultural, scientific contacts and cooperation as well as to ensure good infrastructure connections. In this context, special importance is attached to relations with Serbia, which entails the relationship of equal partnership and mutual respect.</li> <li>•Montenegro sees the good relations with neighbours and the regional cooperation as tool to reach its strategic integration goals such as EU and NATO membership. Montenegro supports development of regional cooperation and further advancement of cooperation mechanisms among countries of South-Eastern Europe.</li> </ul>
<b>Croatia</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Kosovo has no open issues with Croatia. Kosovo is not presented specifically but falls into the third pillar of Croatia’s basic policy aims that of “Enhancing relations with neighbour countries”. In addition, Croatia has a special interest in a permanent stabilisation and democratisation of South East Europe, in ensuring a permanent peace and development of this part of Europe, establishing good neighbourly relations based on equality and reciprocity, and in finding a political way based on the international law to solve all open issues remaining after the breakup of Former Yugoslavia.</li> <li>•Furthermore, the Croatian government will develop its relations with neighbour countries based on the principles of good-neighbourliness, mutual respect of sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity, equality and solving of open issues through political dialogue, based on the principles of international law, or with international legal help.</li> </ul>
<b>Slovenia</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Kosovo and Slovenia have no open issues among one another. In its foreign policy within the Western Balkans pillar Slovenia considers this area a priority of Slovenian interest and activity.</li> <li>•Due to co-dependence of Slovenia’s security and prosperity and the situation in the region, the relations with the countries of the Western Balkans are characterised by amicability, willingness to offer assistance, and a sincere wish to contribute to the stability and economic and social development of countries in the immediate neighbourhood that share our history, cultural and linguistic roots. In addition are mentioned among others also the 329 Slovenian troops are stationed in Kosovo as members of the KFOR units ensuring security.</li> <li>Slovenia’s positive relations with all the countries of the Western Balkans are founded on trust and the self-confident partnership of equal members. Slovenian relations with foreign countries are founded on a constant and politically impartial stand. This also holds true for its contacts with countries in conflict, such as Serbia and Kosovo.</li> <li>•Slovenia continues to be a firm supporter of the enlargement of the European Union to incorporate the countries of the Western Balkans.</li> </ul>
<b>Bullgaria</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Kosovo and Bulgaria have no open issues. Kosovo is not mentioned specifically in Bulgaria’s foreign policy priorities. However, stability in the regions of Southeastern Europe and the Black Sea is of special interest to Bulgaria. A reliable and predictable security environment conducive to the sustainable development of the countries in the region and promoting security and development of cooperation in a Euro-Atlantic and European context is needed.</li> </ul>
<b>Romania</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Rumania does not recognize Kosovo as an independent country. In addition on Romania’s key policy for Western Balkans Kosovo is not mentioned among the other countries of this area.</li> </ul>
<b>Greece</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Greece does not recognize Kosovo as an independent country. In its regional policy is stated that Greece is developing and implementing a cohesive regional policy, the ultimate goal of which is to consolidate peace and security, and spread prosperity, throughout our immediate neighbourhood. •The history of Greece is interwoven with the history of the Balkans, an area in which Greece has played a major role down through the centuries. Historically, the Balkans has been a volatile region, and the latest – and hopefully the last – conflicts in the region occurred at the turn of the 21st century, in the wake of the break-up of Yugoslavia. Kosovo is mentioned as an issue derived from the break-up of Yugoslavia.</li> <li>•The country claims to be pursuing the consolidation of stability, security and development in the region through the establishment of good neighbourly relations and respect for the basic principles of international law and order – as they are set down in the UN Charter – as well as through the full incorporation of all the Balkan countries into the European and Euroatlantic institutions.</li> </ul>

Source: Official documents of regional states

## Annex 2: Scoring for quality of relations

Scoring/points from Assessment Matrix for quality of relations between Kosovo and other states in the region											
States	Establishment of diplomatic relations	Establishment of relations at ambassadorial level	Representation in Kosovo	Representation in country x	Recognition	Nr. of agreements	Allowing freedom of movement for RKS citizens	Investment (in millions of Euros)	Total	Final score	Quality
Turkey	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	32	4.00	Excellent
Albania	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	31	3.88	Excellent
Slovenia	4	4	4	4	4	2	0	4	26	3.25	Very Good
Macedonia	3	3	4	4	2	4	4	1	25	3.13	Very Good
Croatia	4	4	4	4	3	2	0	0	21	2.63	Good
Bulgaria	4	4	4	4	3	2	0	1	22	2.75	Good
Montenegro	2	0	3	3	2	1	4	no data	15	1.88	Fair
Serbia	0	0	1	1	0	0	4	0	6	0.75	Poor
Greece	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	2	0.25	Poor
Romania	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.13	Poor
B&H	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00	Poor

## Annex 3: Scoring for intensity of relations

Scoring/points from Assessment Matrix for intensity of relations between Kosovo and other states in the region							
States	Presidential visits/meetings	Prime Ministerial visits/meetings	Foreign Ministerial visits/meetings	Trade volume (in millions of Euros)	Total	Final score	Intensity
Albania	4	4	4	3	15	3.75	Very Intensive
Turkey	2	2	2	3	9	2.25	Intensive
Macedonia	1	1	2	4	8	2	Moderately intensive
Croatia	2	2	2	2	8	2	Moderately intensive
Slovenia	1	2	3	2	8	2	Moderately intensive
Bulgaria	1	1	1	1	4	1	Moderately intensive
Greece	0	0	2	2	4	1	Moderately intensive
Serbia	0	0	0	4	4	1	Moderately intensive
Montenegro	1	1	1	0	3	0.75	Inactive
B&H	0	0	0	2	2	0.5	Inactive
Romania	0	0	0	0	0	0	Inactive

## Annex 4: Recognitions and establishment of diplomatic relations

Recognitions and establishment of diplomatic relations			
States	Recognition	Diplomatic relations with Kosovo	Date of establishment of diplomatic relations
Albania	18.02.2008	Yes	18.02.2008
Turkey	18.02.2008	Yes	18.02.2008
Macedonia	09.10.2008	Yes	18.10.2009
Serbia	No	No	No
BeH	No	No	No
Montenegro	09.10.2008	Yes	15.01.2010
Croatia	19.03.2008	Yes	30.06.2008
Slovenia	05.03.2008	Yes	15.05.2008
Bullgaria	20.03.2008	Yes	27.05.2008
Romania	No	No	No
Greece	No	No	No

Source: *Kosovobankyou.org* and *Kosovo MFA*

## Annex 5: Investments per GDP of the states of the region in Kosovo

Regional Investments in Kosovo			
States	Annual GDP 2008-2012 (Euro)	Annual Investment in Kosovo 2008-2012 (Euro)	Investment / GDP
Albania	9,103,083,707.46	16,271,100.58	0.18%
Slovenia	35,813,926,455.34	30,918,194.78	0.09%
Macedonia	7,063,515,894.47	2,456,910.44	0.03%
Turkey	529,723,858,261.08	28,682,710.79	0.01%
Bulgaria	36,765,300,926.39	3,573,691.68	0.01%
Serbia	29,946,420,711.00	1,464,795.53	0.00%
Greece	217,363,261,780.39	1,306,822.96	0.00%
Croatia	45,364,864,587.67	1,276,044.66	0.00%
B&H	12,823,737,263.07	428,679.75	0.00%
Montenegro	3,153,157,986.15	n/a	n/a
Romania	133,243,905,052.57	n/a	n/a

Source: World Bank and Central Bank of Kosovo

## Annex 6: Comprehensive table

Comprehensive table									
States	Recognition	Date of establishment of diplomatic relations	Establishment of relations at ambassadorial level	Number of Agreements	Investment/GDP 2008-2012 avg.	Trade Volume 2008-2012 avg. (Euro)	Presidential visits/meetings	Prime Ministerial visits/meetings	Foreign Ministerial visits/meetings
Albania	18.02.2008	18.02.2008	18.02.2008	17	0.18%	109,310,400.00	16	13	10
Turkey	18.02.2008	18.02.2008	18.02.2008	21	0.01%	168,551,200.00	4	4	5
Macedonia	09.10.2008	18.10.2009	18.10.2009	16	0.03%	346,593,200.00	3	2	6
Serbia	No	No	No	11*	0.00%	250,443,000.00	1*	16*	0*
BeH	No	No	No	0	0.00%	71,596,000.00	0	0	0
Montenegro	09.10.2008	15.01.2010	No	3	n/a	19,067,800.00	2	1	3
Croatia	19.03.2008	30.06.2008	30.06.2008	8	0.00%	62,850,800.00	6	5	5
Slovenia	05.03.2008	15.05.2008	15.05.2008	6	0.09%	71,047,600.00	3	5	8
Bullgaria	20.03.2008	27.05.2008	27.05.2008	4	0.01%	47,557,800.00	1	2	3
Romania	No	No	No	0	n/a	14,760,200.00	0	0	0
Greece	No	No	No	0	0.00%	96,159,800.00	0	0	4

\*Non-bilateral Agreements

\*meetings in Brussels

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