

UN and Non-UN Peacekeeping Dataset Codebook

Version 4-2024

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When using this data, please always cite the article introducing this dataset:

Bara, Corinne & Lisa Hultman (2020). Just Different Hats? Comparing UN and Non-UN Peacekeeping. *International Peacekeeping* 27(3): 341-368.

Fourth version

In this new version, data have been extended and now cover 1993-2023. The data is now compatible with the UCDP Armed Conflict Dataset v.24.¹

Compared to the first version introduced in the article above, this version differs on a number of key points:

Instead of distinguishing between troops, police, and observers, this version distinguishes only between military and police. The reason is that from 2015 onwards, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), a key source for this dataset, does not distinguish between troops and observers anymore. The rationale is that the distinction between troops and observers is usually only clear in UN missions, while in the case of non-UN missions, it is not always clear whether military personnel correspond to troops or military observers as defined by the UN.²

There is now only one interpolation method applied to go from annual to monthly personnel numbers, rather than two as in the first version. We now linearly interpolate between known numbers, and extrapolate to the start and end of missions by extending the first and last known numbers as they are.

Information on whether a mission is a pure police mission is dropped, and the organization categories are changed, see information below.

A more detailed way of categorizing missions by organization (UN/regional/ad-hoc) is introduced, see "Variables in the Dataset".

Rather than dropping all political or purely civilian peacebuilding missions, all missions are now included as long as they at some point in time have at least 50 military or at least 50 police personnel. This newly includes some political missions, and newly excludes very few traditional peacekeeping (observer) missions that never reach these numbers. The rationale is that the distinction between purely civilian/political missions is again easier for UN than non-UN missions, and the new criterion treats all missions uniformly.

¹ Gleditsch, Nils Petter, et al. 2002. "Armed Conflict 1946-2001: A New Dataset." *Journal of Peace Research* 39 (5): 615-637; Davies, Shawn, et al. 2024. Organized violence 1989-2023, and the prevalence of organized crime groups. *Journal of Peace Research* 61(4).

² Email conversation with Timo Smit, SIPRI, in 2017.

Missions are not dropped for years during which they fall below the 50 military/police criterion, but a new criterion is applied that drops missions as soon as they have 0 military and 0 police for at least three consecutive years.

The definition of what a peacekeeping operation is has generally become broader. Earlier versions of this data excluded for instance what Bellamy & Williams term “regime support operations”. These are missions invited by host-state authorities to help the state (relatively one-sidedly) quell some form of insurgency but have no mandate to support a peace process.³ By this standard, the Multinational Force in Iraq was excluded, and newer missions such as the SADC Mission in Mozambique (SAMIM) deployed to support the Republic of Mozambique to combat terrorism and acts of violent extremism, would never have been included. The reason that such missions are now included (also back to 1993) is that even the character of UN peacekeeping missions (always included) has changed. Stabilization missions such as MINUSMA in Mali, MONUSCO in the DRC, or MINUSCA in the Central African Republic, are very much deployed to help host states stabilize their country and support them in their counterinsurgency activities, to an extent that they have been criticized to help bolster illiberal regimes.⁴ Including similar operations by other organizations than the UN accounts for this shift in peacekeeping doctrine and makes missions comparable. Moreover, the value of this dataset lies in particular in being able to study how different peacekeeping actors work together, and the UN’s New Agenda for Peace explicitly calls for regional and subregional organizations to conduct this type of robust stabilization and counterterrorism operations; the UNSC usually authorizes them these days; and partners with them or offers support packages.⁵

Download data

<https://www.corinnebara.net/data/>

³ Bellamy, Alex J., and Paul D. Williams. 2015. “Trends in Peace Operations, 1947-2013.” In: The Oxford Handbook of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations, edited by Joachim Koops, Norrie Macqueen, Thierry Tardy and Paul D. Williams, pp. 13-42. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

⁴ Karlsrud, J. (2018). From Liberal Peacebuilding to Stabilization and Counterterrorism. *International Peacekeeping*, 26(1), 1–21.

⁵ United Nations, Our Common Agenda Policy Brief: A New Agenda for Peace, <https://dppa.un.org/en/a-new-agenda-for-peace>; see also Duursma, A., Bara, C., et al 2023. UN Peacekeeping at 75: Achievements, Challenges, and Prospects. *International Peacekeeping*, 30(4), 415–476; Bara, Corinne and Maurice P. Schumann (2023) *Partnership Peacekeeping Works: What Does this Mean in a Divided World?* IPI Global Observatory. New York: International Peace Institute (IPI).

Introduction

This document describes the UN and Non-UN Peacekeeping Dataset, compiled by Corinne Bara, ETH Zürich. The dataset offers information on the approximate monthly number of military and police peacekeepers deployed by the UN, regional organizations, and coalitions of states to civil conflicts globally between 1993 and 2023.

The primary source for this dataset is peacekeeping data provided by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). SIPRI offers information on peacekeeping personnel deployments in their annual SIPRI Yearbooks from 1993 onwards.⁶

In the creation of the UN and Non-UN Peacekeeping Dataset, the author has:

- compiled this data from the SIPRI Yearbooks;
- used information from mission mandates to link the peacekeeping missions to conflicts of the UCDP Armed Conflict Dataset v.24.1 for which they had a mandate; and
- quality-checked and consolidated the data by correcting strange/improbable data points and filling in missing observations by resorting to additional sources and case research.⁷

Importantly, the author has turned the annual peacekeeping information collected by SIPRI into monthly data by interpolating between known data points. The interpolation procedure and its validity is discussed in detail in the article. For the interpolation to work, there naturally have to be at least two known data points for each mission. In about 20 missions where this was not the case (usually missions that lasted only a few months), I have either used the same one known number for all months, or used the last known personnel numbers from a predecessor mission if there was one.

The dataset also contains variables with the “true” (not interpolated) numbers for UN missions, for which this data is available monthly from the International Peace Institute (IPI) Peacekeeping Database⁸, and from the UN directly on their UN Peace and Security Data Hub.⁹ I recommend using this data when studying only UN missions and not comparing UN and non-UN missions, and we have used it in the article to assess how good of a proxy the interpolated numbers are for the true monthly numbers.

Generally, users with particular questions about coding decisions for individual missions or users who would like to report mistakes in the data are invited to contact me directly: corinne.bara@sipo.gess.ethz.ch

⁶ <https://www.sipri.org/yearbook>

⁷ For inquiries about particular cases and/or decisions, please email the author.

⁸ <https://www.ipinst.org/providing-for-peacekeeping-database>

⁹ <https://psdata.un.org/>

Peacekeeping Definition

The peacekeeping missions included in this dataset mostly follow the definition employed by SIPRI, but to include a broader set of missions we loosen this definition somewhat, and also employ two key restriction criteria.

SIPRI defines peacekeeping as “operations that are conducted under the authority of the UN and operations conducted by regional organizations or by ad hoc coalitions of states that were sanctioned by the UN or authorized by a UN Security Council resolution, with the stated intention to: (a) serve as an instrument to facilitate the implementation of peace agreements already in place, (b) support a peace process, or (c) assist conflict prevention and/or peace-building efforts.”¹⁰

Our data is narrower in the sense that we exclude missions that do not deploy uniformed personnel (troops, military observers/experts, or police).¹¹ This decision excludes for instance all missions by the OSCE, which are always civilian; many small missions by the EU, and most political missions by the UN (except when they have sizable troop or police contingents).

In addition, we only include missions that are deployed during an ongoing UCDP intra-state conflict, or during any time *following* a UCDP intra-state conflict that was ever ongoing between 1989 and 2023 (postwar years). That is, we exclude peace operations that were deployed outside contexts that ever had a civil conflict (such as the peacekeeping missions in Albania in the late 1990s); and preventative deployments such as UNPREDEP in Macedonia, that had already left by the time the conflict started.

Our data is broader in the sense that we:

- a) Also include missions by single states (such as the French Operation Sangaris in the CAR or the UK Operation Palliser in Sierra Leone);
- b) We also include missions that are not sanctioned or authorized by a UNSC resolution (which was less common in earlier years than it is now);
- c) And as discussed above, we are more lenient in including stabilization missions whose link to an existing peace process or agreement is more tenuous.

Importantly, we include such missions only if they are clearly distinguishable from unilateral interventions on behalf of one conflict party, and we also only include such missions only if there is no clear agreement in the scholarly community that they should be excluded, which is often indicated by the fact that they are included in at least a subset of peacekeeping mission compilations by other scholars.

The goal is to have a broad compilation of peacekeeping operations, with the idea that individual users of the data can always exclude missions with which they do not agree.

¹⁰ SIPRI. 2019. “Definitions and Methodology”. <https://www.sipri.org/databases/pko/methods>.

¹¹ Except when this applies only to certain years in between, i.e., if missions temporarily are reported as having zero military or police, but they do have such personnel before and after such a gap.

How to Use the Dataset

The unit of analysis in this dataset is a mission-conflict-month. This means that each mission included in the sample is listed for each conflict/post-conflict month during which it was deployed, with information both on the mission (personnel numbers) and on the conflict. Conflict/post-conflict months without peacekeeping are not in the data.

It is important for the user to know that neither mission-months nor conflict-months are uniquely identified in this data. If several missions were deployed to a conflict at the same time, then the same conflict-month will appear multiple times in the data, once for each mission. Likewise, if a mission was deployed to several conflicts (as in Bosnia in the 1990s) where UCDP codes three contemporaneous conflicts, then the same mission-month will appear multiple times in the data, once for each conflict. This double structure allows users to reshape the data in two ways, based on their main interest:

Conflict focus: Users interested in peacekeeping information by conflict-month, such as the total number of non-UN troops deployed to a conflict at any point in time, should reshape/collapse the data by conflict-month ("conflictid date"), and aggregate the peacekeeping numbers up to that level.

Mission focus: Users interested in the missions themselves, independent of the conflict to which they were deployed (for instance to generate comparisons of missions or comparisons of UN versus non-UN missions), should drop mission duplicates, or sample one entry by mission-month ("missionid date").

Note that I have made sure that personnel numbers are not double-counted for particular months in the case of missions that hand over to each other, allowing an unproblematic aggregation of total personnel from all missions present in a conflict-month. If the end month for one mission is the same as the start month for its successor mission, I start the successor mission only in the following month.

Variables in the Dataset

Variable Name	Description
ccode	COW code of the conflict country
location	Name of the conflict country
conflictid	UCDP conflict ID
episodenum	Unique code for each conflict episode. UCDP codes conflicts as terminated if years of fighting are followed by at least one year in which the conflict does not reach 25 battledeaths. Each conflict ID in UCDP can thus have several episodes, interrupted by years of peace. UCDP does not number these episodes. Here, I have created a unique ID for each episode of a conflict (including its peace or postwar years), consisting of the conflict ID and an episode number.
active	Whether the conflict was active (=1) in the month, or in a postwar period (=0).
incompatibility	Incompatibility over which the conflict is fought (from UCDP): 1= territorial; 2=government.
year	Year of the observation
date	Monthly date of the observation
mission_number	Numbering of mission in that conflict (conflictid). Not a unique identifier, but can be used to roughly sort the successive/parallel missions by startyear within a conflict, or to reshape the data from long (conflict-mission-month) to wide (conflict-month).
mission	Mission name (Acronym)
missionid	Unique identifier of each mission per country (that is, UNPROFOR in Bosnia has a different ID than UNPROFOR in Croatia, for instance).
orgname	Name of the deploying organization. ¹²
orgtype	Type of deploying organization. 1=UN; 2=Regional Organization; 3=Ad-hoc coalition of states or single state.
outofregion	1 if a regional organization or ad-hoc coalition operates outside its region, such as the EU in Africa or NATO in Afghanistan or coalitions of states where the predominant personnel contributors are not from the region (Multinational Force in Iraq, or French Operation Sangaris in CAR). Regions are defined coarsely as Europe, America, Africa, MENA, and Asia/Oceania. NA for UN missions.
military_orig	Number of deployed military (troops and observers). Not interpolated. Missing except for months in which this information is reported (mostly December and end-of-mission)
police_orig	Number of deployed police. Not interpolated. Missing except for months in which this information is reported (mostly December and end-of-mission)
totals_orig	Number of total deployed personnel. Sum of military_orig and police_orig where this information is available.
military_ipo	MAIN VARIABLE: Approximate number of deployed military (troops and observers). Interpolated between known values and extrapolated to start and end (with earliest/last known number).
police_ipo	MAIN VARIABLE: Approximate number of deployed police. Interpolated between known values and extrapolated to start and end (with earliest/last known number).
totals_ipo	MAIN VARIABLE: Approximate total number of deployed personnel. Sum of military_ipo and police_ipo.
military_uncomp	Monthly ("true") number of UN troops and observers.
police_uncomp	Monthly ("true") number of UN police.
totals_uncomp	Monthly ("true") number of UN totals. Sum of military_uncomp and police_uncomp.

¹² CEMAC/ECCAS are taken together into one category (due to mostly overlapping membership), Western European Union (WEU) is included into EU; OAU/AU are taken together as OAU was the predecessor organization; and there are two categories for when the mission is not run by an organization, namely AdHoc for multinational coalitions, and SingleState for single state missions.

