

KEY DATA

NO APMBC ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE:

Not party to the APMBC

AP MINE CONTAMINATION:

1.12km²

Light
(National estimate)

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS

Release of AP mined area	Release in 2024 (km ²)	Release in 2023 (km ²)
Clearance	0.05	0.03
Technical Survey	0.06	0
Non-Technical Survey	0	0

Destruction of AP mines during clearance, survey, and spot tasks	2024	2023
AP Mines destroyed	8	10

MAIN AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE OPERATOR IN 2024:

- The HALO Trust (HALO)

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

In 2024, Kosovo launched its new Mine Action Strategy for 2025–30, which targets the completion of all landmine and cluster munition remnants (CMR) clearance by 2030. Clearance output was higher in 2024 than the previous year, although 70% of the area cleared found no mines. The HALO Trust is the only operator conducting mine clearance in Kosovo and, at the time of writing, the programme was facing closure due to a lack of funding.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- While formal accession to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) is not currently possible for Kosovo, as it is not yet recognised as a State by the depository, Kosovo should submit a letter to the United Nations (UN) Secretary-General stating that it intends to fully comply, on a voluntary basis, with the APMBC and submit voluntary Article 7 reports annually.
- The Kosovo Mine Action Centre (KMAC) should seek to complete clearance of anti-personnel (AP) mines as soon as possible. With the newly developed mine action strategy, and if some funding can be sustained, KMAC should ensure the implementation of realistic annual targets and adhere to the established timeline for completion.
- A specific resource mobilisation strategy should be developed as a matter of urgency.

AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT

- Kosovo Mine Action Centre (KMAC)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Kosovo Security Force (KSF)

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- The HALO Trust (HALO)

OTHER ACTORS

- Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

As at the end of 2024, KMAC reported that 21 AP mined areas remained covering more than 0.89km² (see Table 1). In addition, three areas are contaminated with both AP mines and CMR totalling 225,000m², bringing the total mined area to close to 1.12km² (see Table 2).¹ This is an increase from 28 mined areas covering almost 1km² reported for end 2023.² The baseline of mine contamination at the end of 2024 cannot be reconciled with the baseline reported by KMAC at the end of 2023.

Table 1: AP mined area by district (at end 2024) (KMAC data)³

District	CHAs	Area (m ²)	SHAs	Area (m ²)	Total areas	Total area (m ²)
South	0	0	4	60,971	4	60,971
East	1	9,516	4	68,832	5	78,348
West	5	352,663	7	398,717	12	751,380
Totals	6	362,179	15	528,520	21	890,699

CHA = Confirmed hazardous area SHA = Suspected hazardous area

Table 2: Mined area by contamination type (at end 2024) (KMAC data)⁴

Type of contamination	Total areas	Total area (m ²)
AP mines	21	890,699
Mixed AP mines and CMR	3	225,000
Totals	24	1,115,699

The last detailed survey of contamination in Kosovo was in 2013, during which HALO and KMAC systematically conducted community surveys across most of the districts in Kosovo, with the exception of four municipalities in the north, confirming a total of 130 hazardous areas: 79 mined areas covering an estimated 2.76km² and 51 cluster munition strikes covering an estimated 7.63km².⁵ The northern municipalities have since been surveyed and KMAC has confirmed that no mined areas remain.⁶

HALO conducted non-technical survey (NTS) in 2021–22 with a view to creating confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs) and suspected hazardous areas (SHAs), as this was not done

during the 2013 survey (prior to the recent survey there was no classification of CHAs and SHAs in Kosovo). HALO says the project significantly contributed to ensuring Kosovo's current baseline was as accurate as possible given available resources.⁷ No previously unrecorded AP mined areas were discovered in 2024.⁸

Kosovo is contaminated by mines, CMR, and other explosive remnants of war (ERW), primarily as a result of the conflict between the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) and the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) in the late 1990s, and between Yugoslavia and North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) member States in 1999.⁹

Both AP and anti-vehicle (AV) mines were used during the conflict – in fixed-pattern minefields as well as more randomly in “nuisance” minefields.¹⁰ The UN claimed in 2002 that “the problems associated with landmines, cluster munitions and other items of unexploded ordnance [UXO] in Kosovo have been virtually eliminated”,¹¹ but further investigation revealed considerably more contamination than thought.¹²

1 Email from Ahmet Sallova, Head, KMAC, 5 May 2025.

2 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 17 May 2024.

3 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 5 May 2025.

4 Ibid.

5 HALO, “Action on cluster munitions in Kosovo”, Side event, First Review Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM), Dubrovnik, 10 September 2015.

6 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 23 August 2022.

7 Email from Michael Montafi, Programme Manager, HALO, 18 April 2023.

8 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 5 May 2025.

9 See UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), “UNMIK OKPCC EOD Management Section Annual Report 2005”, Pristina, 18 January 2006, p. 2; and International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), *Explosive Remnants of War, Cluster Bombs and Landmines in Kosovo*, Rev'd Edn, Geneva, June 2001, at: <https://bit.ly/331PWfQ>, pp. 6 and 15.

10 ICRC, *Explosive Remnants of War, Cluster Bombs and Landmines in Kosovo*, June 2001, p. 15.

11 “UNMIK Mine Action Programme Annual Report – 2001”, Mine Action Coordination Cell, Pristina, undated but 2002, p. 1.

12 HALO, “Failing the Kosovars: The Hidden Impact and Threat from ERW”, Report, 15 December 2006, p. 1.

OTHER EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE CONTAMINATION

In addition to contamination from mines, Kosovo is contaminated with CMR (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants 2025* report on Kosovo for further information) as well as other ERW. The Kosovo Force (KFOR) and KSF explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) teams regularly dispose of ERW in response to information from the public or demining organisations.¹³

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Kosovo's mine action programme is fully nationally owned, with a strong, long-standing commitment from the government, and benefits from a dedicated team of permanent national staff.¹⁴ KMAC is responsible for managing survey and clearance of mines and ERW throughout Kosovo. KMAC prepares an annual work plan in cooperation with international demining NGOs and coordinates their operations along with the national demining teams of the KSF. It also coordinates survey, quality assurance (QA), risk education, public information, and victim assistance.¹⁵ KMAC's role

and responsibilities as head of the national mine action programme under the auspices of the Ministry of Defence were established and institutionalised by Kosovo's 2012 Law on Humanitarian Demining which was amended in 2022.¹⁶

NGO operators in Kosovo have consistently reported a constructive working relationship with KMAC and say there is an enabling environment for mine action, with clear administrative processes in place for obtaining visas and annual accreditation.¹⁷

FUNDING FOR AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE

In 2024, Kosovo's government provided €1.1 million in financial support to KMAC and the KSF for mine and CMR clearance, a similar amount to previous years.¹⁸ In 2024 and 2025, HALO was funded by the EU for mine clearance. This funding was coming to an end in December 2025, and no new funding had been secured as at May 2025.¹⁹

It has been estimated that €3.5 million will be required on an annual basis to meet Kosovo's mine action strategy's objectives, totalling €21 million between 2025 and 2030. At the time of writing, the programme had limited, confirmed international funding beyond the summer of 2025. To address this gap, the mine action programme will actively seek to mobilise funds.²⁰

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

Kosovo's mine action strategy for 2025–30 prioritises gender and diversity mainstreaming as a guiding principle. The strategy directs that mine action activities be sensitive to gender and inclusive of ethnic and disability considerations, declaring that gender and diversity considerations should be integrated into all phases of planning, implementation

and follow-up.²¹ Both KMAC and KSF have gender policies in place. KMAC reported that the KSF's gender policy aims to facilitate the consultation of all groups affected by mines and ERW, including women and children. KMAC hired a Gender and Safeguarding focal point who began working in 2023.²²

Table 3: Gender composition of operators in 2024²³

Operator	Total staff	Women staff	Total managerial or supervisory staff	Women managerial or supervisory staff	Total operational staff	Women operational staff
KMAC	5	1 (20%)	1	0 (0%)	3	0 (0%)
KSF	112	27 (24%)	14	2 (14%)	60	9 (15%)
HALO*	155	42 (27%)	28	6 (21%)	134	36 (27%)
Totals	272	70 (26%)	43	8 (19%)	197	45 (23%)

*Data correct as at December 2024.

13 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 1 August 2012.

14 "Mine Action Strategy 2019–2024 in Republic of Kosovo", 4 April 2019, pp. 5–6.

15 ICRC, *Explosive Remnants of War, Cluster Bombs and Landmines in Kosovo*, June 2001, p. 15.

16 Emails from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 16 June and 3 July 2017; Ministry of Defence, "Mine Action Strategy 2019–2024 in Republic of Kosovo", 4 April 2019, p. 3; and Kosovo Mine Action Strategy 2025–2030, 18 June 2024, p. 4.

17 Emails from Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 30 March 2023; and Michael Montafi, HALO, 18 April 2023.

18 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 22 April 2025.

19 Email from Fred Wellesley, Programme Manager, HALO, 15 April 2025.

20 Kosovo Mine Action Strategy 2025–2030, 18 June 2024, p. 16.

21 Ibid., p. 18.

22 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 22 April 2025.

23 Ibid.; and emails from Claus Nielsen, NPA, 10 April 2025; and Fred Wellesley, HALO, 15 April 2025.

The mine action strategy recognises the lack of economic opportunities in Kosovo, with women and youth particularly impacted by limited employment prospects. This leads many to seek work abroad, posing both a challenge and an opportunity for the mine action sector. It poses a threat of losing valuable talent and human capital, yet it also provides an opportunity to recruit new talent within Kosovo. By hiring both women and men from diverse ethnic groups and offering competitive salary packages and benefits, HALO actively promote gender equality and economic empowerment within local communities. This approach aligns with the principles outlined in its Gender and Diversity Policy.²⁴

HALO's gender policy, developed with the Kosovo Women's Network, aims to improve recruitment and retention of women by addressing barriers such as childcare

responsibilities.²⁵ In 2024, HALO continued its provision of childcare stipends and explicitly mentioned them in job announcements to attract female applicants and support retention. Health insurance was also extended to all staff. In 2024, nine women received childcare stipends; two baby boxes were issued; and 92 school-supply packages were distributed to employees' children during the spring and winter terms.²⁶

HALO continues to ensure that as many household members as possible are consulted during pre- and post-clearance surveys and that women, children, and ethnic minorities are included in community liaison (CL) activities. There is always a female CL Officer supporting the NTS teams, and senior management staff who are fluent in relevant languages are deployed for CL.²⁷

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION

Kosovo has a national mine action standard on the environment although it has not yet been updated in line with the revised IMAS 07.13 (second edition, 3 July 2024).²⁸ KMAC reported that environmental assessments are integrated into the planning and delivery of survey and clearance.²⁹ It prioritises clearance based on risk reduction, development, environmental protection, and poverty reduction, with contaminated land whose clearance would reduce emissions by enabling better land management or support climate adaptation given the highest priority.³⁰ The Law on Climate Change, adopted in December 2023, seeks to reduce greenhouse gas emissions under the Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning and Infrastructure.³¹

Demining takes place from April to November, but increasingly frequent and unpredictable weather due to climate change is affecting operations. NPA Kosovo has an environmental policy in place, conducts environmental assessments to support the planning and delivery of survey and clearance, and, since 2023, has an environmental focal point for the programme.³² In March 2024, HALO's Kosovo programme introduced a standard operating procedure (SOP) on environmental management for operations, aligned with HALO's global environmental management SOP. This SOP aims to ensure minimal environmental impact and mitigates potential negative effects of survey and clearance operations.³³

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

KMAC uses the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) New Generation version for its national mine action database. Data are disaggregated between mines, CMR, and other ERW.³⁴ Operators were positive in their assessments of the quality and accessibility of data contained in the database and of KMAC's information management systems in general. KMAC is collaborating with the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) to install IMSMA Core, which was expected to be operational by late 2024 but at the time of writing was still in development.³⁵

HALO reported that all data collection forms are consistent and enable collection of the necessary data and added that

the database is checked in comparison to HALO's quarterly reports; once every task is completed or when KMAC agrees and signs off on a re-survey or survey conducted by an NTS team, the data is fed into IMSMA.³⁶ The land release data reported to Mine Action Review by clearance operators and the KMAC were more or less aligned. This is an improvement compared to previous years' reports, which typically contained greater discrepancies.

KMAC reported to Mine Action Review in 2023 that voluntary submission of Article 7 reports was again under consideration by the authorities.³⁷

24 Kosovo Mine Action Strategy 2025-2030, 18 June 2024, p. 5.

25 Email from Olivia Meader, HALO, 22 May 2020.

26 Email from Fred Wellestey, HALO, 15 April 2025.

27 Email from Megan Dwyer, HALO, 11 May 2022.

28 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 24 April 2023.

29 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 14 May 2024.

30 GICHD, "Mine Action and the Resilience of Communities to Climate Change", Report, December 2023, p. 40.

31 Kosovo Mine Action Strategy 2025-2030, 18 June 2024, p. 5.

32 Email from Claus Nielsen, NPA, 10 April 2025.

33 Email from Michael Montañ, HALO, 7 May 2024.

34 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 30 April 2019.

35 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 22 April 2025.

36 Email from Megan Dwyer, HALO, 11 May 2022.

37 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 8 June 2023.

PLANNING AND TASKING

Kosovo's Mine Action Strategy for 2025–30, developed by KMAC in consultation with operators and with the support of the GICHD, declares that the risk of explosive ordnance contamination will be considered tolerable once all high and medium-priority tasks have been completed by 2030, and provided that there are no incidents for five years thereafter. The general expectation is that any remaining contamination after 2030 would be considered as residual.³⁸ Achievement of Strategic Objective 1 on land release is to be assessed by reference to four outputs:

- Greater clarity on the remaining contamination in Northern municipalities will be established;
- Mine action organisations will continue clearance operations to fulfil task completion, prioritising high and medium-priority tasks and concluding with low-priority tasks. However, the strategy also states that the risk of EO contamination is considered tolerable once all high- and medium-priority tasks are completed which is the objective that HALO is working towards;³⁹

- In light of current efficiency challenges and anticipated obstacles posed by difficult terrain such as dense vegetation and steep slopes, KMAC will reassess clearance requirements to enhance efficiency and effectiveness; and
- Recognising that 2030 marks the conclusion of the international mine action organisations' presence in Kosovo, the mine action programme will implement staff transition plans.⁴⁰

A target of 45,000m² of annual mine clearance has been set, along with zero high and medium priority tasks remaining by 2030 and as few low priority tasks remaining as possible. It is planned that of the 38 municipalities currently contaminated with landmines and CMR, 35 will be declared free from risks of landmines or CMR by 2030.⁴¹

KMAC elaborates an annual work plan for survey and clearance of landmines. In 2024, due to an increase in funding from the EU, HALO expanded their clearance capacities for mined areas, allowing KMAC to incorporate additional regions into their annual work plan.⁴²

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

In 2024, the national mine action standard (NMAS) for land release in Kosovo was updated in accordance with IMAS and in consultation with clearance operators although the changes were related to CMR clearance rather than mines.⁴³

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

In 2024, Kosovo's national mine action programme's capacity consisted of two international operators—HALO and NPA—and a national operator: the KSF. NPA did not conduct survey or clearance of AP mined area in 2024, tackling only CMR.⁴⁴ The KSF did not conduct any survey or clearance in 2024

but provided a round-the-clock EOD emergency response. KFOR, a NATO-led international peacekeeping force, supports NPA with BAC in northern Kosovo.⁴⁵ The demining season is from the end of March to the end of November due to weather conditions.⁴⁶

Table 4: Operational clearance capacities deployed in 2024⁴⁷

Operator	Manual clearance teams	Total clearance personnel
HALO	5	*24

*Average across the year with 27 personnel in March–April; 22 in May to July; 23 in August–September; and 25 in October–December.

HALO's operational personnel are cross-trained for mine clearance and BAC and can move readily between the two.⁴⁸ There was an increase in the number of clearance personnel deployed by HALO in 2024 compared to the previous year due to increased funding. In 2025, however, two major funding contracts were due to expire. Unless new funding is secured, the programme may close by the end of the year.⁴⁹

38 Kosovo Mine Action Strategy 2025–2030, 18 June 2024, p. 8.

39 Email from Fred Wellesley, HALO, 5 September 2025.

40 Kosovo Mine Action Strategy 2025–2030, 18 June 2024, p. 10.

41 Ibid., p. 11.

42 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 17 May 2024.

43 Emails from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 22 April 2025; and Fred Wellesley, HALO, 5 September 2025.

44 Email from Claus Nielsen, NPA, 25 April 2024.

45 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 3 September 2024.

46 "Mine Action Strategy 2019–2024 in Republic of Kosovo", 4 April 2019, p. 3.

47 Email from Fred Wellesley, HALO, 15 April 2025.

48 Email from Megan Dwyer, HALO, 11 May 2022.

49 Email from Fred Wellesley, HALO, 15 April 2025.

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2024

Table 5: Summary of land release outputs in 2024

Release of AP mined area	Release in 2024 (m ²)	Comments
Clearance	47,065	HALO data
Technical survey	56,822	HALO/KMAC data
Non-technical survey	0	HALO/KMAC data
Destruction of AP mines during clearance, survey, and spot tasks	2024	Comments
AP mines destroyed	8	HALO data

SURVEY IN 2024

In 2024, a total of 56,822m² of area was reduced through technical survey, no area was cancelled through non-technical survey.⁵⁰ This is an increase from 2023 when no mined area was released through survey.⁵¹

Table 6: Release through technical survey in 2024⁵²

District	Operator	No. of areas cleared	Area cleared (m ²)
Gjakovë	HALO	2	20,586
Prizren	HALO	2	36,236
Totals		4	56,822

CLEARANCE IN 2024

In 2024, a total of 47,065m² was released through clearance with eight AP mines found and destroyed (see Table 5). This is an increase from the 29,309m² cleared in 2023,⁵³ but seven tasks totalling 30,371m² were cleared without finding any mines.⁵⁴

Table 7: Mine clearance in 2024⁵⁵

District	Operator	Areas cleared	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed
Ferizaj	HALO	1	14,074	8
Gjakovë	HALO	5	15,010	0
Prizren	HALO	2	18,521	0
Totals		8	47,605	8

50 Emails from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 5 May 2025; and Fred Wellesley, HALO, 15 April 2025.

51 Emails from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 17 May 2024.

52 Emails from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 5 May 2025; and Fred Wellesley, HALO, 15 April 2025.

53 Email from Fred Wellesley, HALO, 15 April 2025.

54 Ibid.

55 Ibid.

PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

Kosovo cannot formally adhere to the APMBBC as it is not recognised as a State by the depositary of the Convention (the UN Secretary-General) and therefore does not have a specific clearance deadline under Article 5. Nonetheless, it has obligations under international human rights law to clear AP mines as soon as possible.

In its Mine Action Strategy 2025–30, Kosovo has set a completion deadline for 2030. Operators expect that Kosovo will be able to meet this deadline as long as donor funding can be secured to maintain capacity.⁵⁶ According to KMAC, securing sufficient donor support to clear the remaining mine and CMR contamination in Kosovo will be one of the primary challenges in 2026 and beyond.⁵⁷ This effort is seen as a crucial contributor to enhancing human security, economic development, and stability in Kosovo and the broader Western Balkans region.⁵⁸

Table 8: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2024	0.05
2023	0.03
2022	0.02
2021	0.10
2020	0.14
Total	0.34

PLANNING FOR MANAGEMENT OF RESIDUAL CONTAMINATION

The second strategic objective of Kosovo's Mine Action Strategy 2025–30 focuses on enhancing national capacities and includes a strategic outcome on the management of residual contamination. As clearance operations conclude in 2030, Kosovo will shift from proactive clearance efforts to the reactive management of residual threats by KMAC with support from KSF units. Recognising the unique requirements of risk management, KMAC will seek to ensure that both KMAC and KSF are equipped, staffed, and resourced to address residual contamination effectively.⁵⁹ A comprehensive residual contamination strategy is planned for development and submission to the Government of Kosovo by 2029.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ Email from Claus Nielsen, NPA, 10 April 2025.

⁵⁷ Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 22 April 2025.

⁵⁸ Email from Michael Montafi, HALO, 7 May 2024.

⁵⁹ Kosovo Mine Action Strategy 2025–2030, 18 June 2024, pp. 8 and 12.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 13.