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## THE MYTH OF RISING DEFENCE SPENDING IN BALKANS NEEDS UNPACKING

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*Reports of soaring defence expenditures and even arms races in the Balkans need to be treated with caution given the chronic lack of transparency surrounding this issue.*

Rising defence expenditure trends in the Balkans have drawn a lot of attention in recent years. Frequent announcements by local politicians about large military procurements have contributed to the impression of an arms race in the region.

Strong geopolitical currents buffeting the region due to the war in Ukraine, coupled with ever-present tensions and nationalist rhetoric in the region, keep the eye of the public on the defence sectors.

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