

2021 Report on Kosovo

With a population of 1.8 million (93 % ethnic Albanians), Kosovo* unilaterally declared independence from Serbia in 2008. Kosovo's perspective of a European future was stated during summits in Thessaloniki (2003), Sofia (2018) and, recently, Zagreb (2020), Brdo (2021) and Brussels (2022), where EU leaders reaffirmed their unequivocal support for the Western Balkans' European perspective. The European Parliament is expected to debate the European Commission's 2021 annual report on the country during its July 2022 plenary session.

Background

In 2008, the European Union declared its willingness to assist in the economic and political development of Kosovo by providing a clear European perspective. Despite some success in implementation of the EU–Kosovo Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA), in force since 2016, the country's path to European integration is rather slow, mainly due to internal political instability and an unresolved [bilateral dispute with Serbia](#). The EU helps contribute to stability in Kosovo through the [EULEX rule of law mission](#), and its [Special Representative](#) for the Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue and other Western Balkan regional issues.

According to the Commission's 2021 Kosovo [report](#), most of the reporting period was marked by political instability, which limited legislative activities – including EU-related reforms, despite a new government taking office following early parliamentary elections in February 2021. Furthermore, the Commission's proposal to lift visa requirements for Kosovo citizens is still pending in the Council. The Commission maintains its July 2018 [assessment](#) that Kosovo has fulfilled all visa liberalisation benchmarks.

On a more positive note, on 21 June 2022, Special Envoy Miroslav Lajčák [announced](#) a roadmap, agreed in Brussels by negotiators for Kosovo and Serbia, for the supply of electricity to Serb-run municipalities in northern Kosovo. The deal, part of the EU-facilitated dialogue that aims to normalise relations between Belgrade and Pristina, implements agreements already reached in 2013 and 2015 and is [considered](#) by some analysts as the first practical achievement since 2020.

European Parliament position

On 14 June 2022, Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET) adopted a [report](#) on the Commission's report, drafted by its rapporteur, Viola von Cramon-Taubadel (Greens/EFA, Germany). This report takes note of Kosovo's intention to apply for EU membership in 2022, but stresses that there is no fast-track procedure and that normalisation of relations with Serbia is necessary for Kosovo to advance on its European path. The report also reconfirms support for the Commission's proposal for visa liberalisation. Members are also concerned that the judiciary continues to be inefficient and vulnerable to political interference and welcomes, in this respect, the proposed reform of the prosecutorial system. Finally, Members reconfirm unequivocal support for the EU-facilitated Belgrade-Pristina dialogue.

On 26 April 2022, the Parliament's President, Roberta Metsola, [said](#) the EU must 'think of ways to accelerate the enlargement process in the Western Balkans' because 'stability in the immediate neighbourhood is vital for the EU's own stability'. On 22 June 2022, President Metsola [met](#) Vjosa Osmani, President of Kosovo, reaffirming support for Kosovo's European future and visa liberalisation.

*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

Own-initiative report: [2021/2246\(INI\)](#), Committee responsible: AFET; Rapporteur: Viola von Cramon-Taubadel (Greens/EFA, Germany).

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