



2022/2201(INI)

25.1.2023

DRAFT REPORT

on the 2022 Commission Report on Kosovo
(2022/2201(INI))

Committee on Foreign Affairs

Rapporteur: Viola von Cramon-Taubadel

CONTENTS

	Page
MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION.....	3

MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

**on the 2022 Commission Report on Kosovo
(2022/2201(INI))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Stabilisation and Association Agreement between the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community, of the one part, and Kosovo, of the other part¹, which entered into force on 1 April 2016,
- having regard to the framework agreement between the European Union and Kosovo on the general principles for the participation of Kosovo in Union programmes, in force since 1 August 2017²,
- having regard to the Presidency conclusions of the Thessaloniki European Council meeting of 19-20 June 2003,
- having regard to the Tirana Declaration adopted at the EU-Western Balkans summit of 6 December 2022,
- having regard to the Berlin Process launched on 28 August 2014,
- having regard to the Sofia Summit of 10 November 2020, including the Declaration on Common Regional Market and the Declaration on the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans,
- having regard to the Declaration on Energy Security and Green Transition in the Western Balkans and the agreements on freedom of movement and the recognition of professional and higher-education qualifications adopted at the Berlin Process Summit for the Western Balkans of 3 November 2022,
- having regard to UN Security Council Resolution 1244 of 10 June 1999, to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) Advisory Opinion of 22 July 2010 on the accordance with international law of the unilateral declaration of independence in respect of Kosovo, and to UN General Assembly Resolution 64/298 of 9 September 2010, which acknowledged the content of the ICJ opinion and welcomed the EU's readiness to facilitate dialogue between Serbia and Kosovo,
- having regard to the first agreement on principles governing the normalisation of relations between the governments of Serbia and Kosovo of 19 April 2013, to the agreements of 25 August 2015, and to the ongoing EU-facilitated dialogue for the normalisation of relations,

¹ [OJ L 71, 16.3.2016, p. 3.](#)

² [OJ L 195, 27.7.2017, p. 3.](#)

- having regard to the agreement on free movement between the governments of Serbia and Kosovo of 27 August 2022, and to the agreement on licence plates of 23 November 2022,
- having regard to Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/904 of 3 June 2021 amending Joint Action 2008/124/CFSP on the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX Kosovo)³, which extended the mission’s mandate until 14 June 2023,
- having regard to the Commission communication of 5 February 2020 entitled ‘Enhancing the accession process – A credible EU perspective for the Western Balkans’ (COM(2020)0057),
- having regard to Regulation (EU) 2021/1529 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 September 2021 establishing the Instrument for Pre-Accession assistance (IPA III)⁴,
- having regard to the Commission communication of 6 October 2020 entitled ‘An Economic and Investment plan for the Western Balkans’ (COM(2020)0641), and the Commission staff working document of 6 October 2020 entitled ‘Guidelines for the Implementation of the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans’ (SWD(2020)0223),
- having regard to the Commission assessment of 27 April 2022 on the economic reform programme of Kosovo for 2022-2024 (SWD(2022)0126), and to the joint conclusions of the economic and financial dialogue between the EU and the Western Balkans and Turkey adopted by the Council on 24 May 2022,
- having regard to the Commission communication of 12 October 2022 entitled ‘2022 Communication on EU Enlargement Policy’ (COM(2022)0528), accompanied by the Commission staff working document entitled ‘Kosovo 2022 Report’ (SWD(2022)0334),
- having regard to the Commission communication of 29 April 2020 entitled ‘Support to the Western Balkans in tackling COVID-19 and the post-pandemic recovery’ (COM(2020)0315),
- having regard to the Commission proposal of 4 May 2016 for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EC) No 539/2001 listing the third countries whose nationals must be in possession of visas when crossing the external borders and those whose nationals are exempt from that requirement (Kosovo) (COM(2016)0277), and to its position of 28 March 2019, adopted at first reading, on that Commission proposal⁵,
- having regard to the final report of the European Union Election Observation Mission on the 2021 municipal elections in Kosovo,
- having regard to the fourth meeting of the Stabilisation and Association Council between the European Union and Kosovo held in Brussels on 7 December 2021,

³ [OJ L 197, 4.6.2021, p. 114.](#)

⁴ [OJ L 330, 20.9.2021, p. 1.](#)

⁵ [OJ C 108, 26.3.2021, p. 877.](#)

- having regard to the Council conclusions of 13 December 2022 on enlargement and the stabilisation and association process,
- having regard to the European Court of Auditors Special Report 01/2022 of 10 January 2022 entitled ‘EU support for the rule of law in the Western Balkans: despite efforts, fundamental problems persist’,
- having regard to the European Court of Auditors Special Report 09/2021 of 3 June 2021 entitled ‘Disinformation affecting the EU: tackled but not tamed’,
- having regard to the memorandum following the mission of the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Dunja Mijatović, to Kosovo from 30 May to 3 June 2022⁶,
- having regard to its previous resolutions on Kosovo,
- having regard to its recommendation of 19 June 2020 to the Council, the Commission and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy on the Western Balkans, following the 2020 summit⁷,
- having regard to its resolution of 6 July 2022 on the 2021 Commission Report on Kosovo⁸,
- having regard to its resolution of 15 December 2021 on cooperation on the fight against organised crime in the Western Balkans⁹,
- having regard to the European Council conclusions of 23 and 24 June 2022 on Ukraine, the membership applications of Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, Western Balkans and external relations,
- having regard to the declaration and recommendations adopted at the ninth meeting of the EU-Kosovo Stabilisation and Association Parliamentary Committee, held on 3 and 4 November 2022,
- having regard to the joint declaration of the Second European Parliament-Western Balkans Speakers’ Summit of 28 June 2021, convened by its President with the leaders of the Western Balkan parliaments,
- having regard to its recommendation of 23 November 2022 to the Council, the Commission and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy concerning the new EU strategy for enlargement¹⁰,
- having regard to Rule 54 of its Rules of Procedure,

⁶ <https://rm.coe.int/1680a88e42>.

⁷ [OJ C 362, 8.9.2021, p. 129](#).

⁸ Texts adopted, P9_TA(2022)0285.

⁹ [OJ C 251, 30.6.2022, p. 87](#).

¹⁰ Texts adopted, P9_TA(2022)0406.

- having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs (A9-0000/2023),
- A. whereas enlargement is the most effective EU foreign policy instrument, one of the EU's most successful policies and a geostrategic investment in long-term peace, stability, and security throughout the continent;
- B. whereas the future of the Western Balkans lies in the European Union;
- C. whereas the EU is the largest provider of financial support to Kosovo;

Commitment to EU accession

1. Welcomes Kosovo's application for EU membership, which reflects the pro-European orientation of its citizens and a clear geopolitical strategic choice;
2. Welcomes the long-awaited agreement on granting visa liberalisation to the citizens of Kosovo;
3. Urges the Member States that have not yet recognised Kosovo as a sovereign state to do so;
4. Takes note of the period of political stability following the 2021 elections and encourages Kosovo to make further efforts to address the challenges on its European path; underlines the fact that the pace of the accession process will depend on progress on the rule of law and fundamental rights and the normalisation of relations with Serbia;
5. Commends Kosovo's ongoing alignment with the EU's foreign and security policy, in particular its strong condemnation of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and its implementation of the EU's restrictive measures against Russia and Belarus;
6. Reiterates its support for Kosovo's application for membership of the Council of Europe and the country's plan to join the NATO Partnership for Peace programme;

Democracy and the rule of law

7. Commends Kosovo's progress in strengthening democracy and the rule of law and its increased legislative activities on EU-related reforms;
8. Notes the adoption of significant anti-corruption legislation and calls for the rigorous implementation thereof; underlines that a strong political will is necessary to effectively address high-level corruption;
9. Reiterates its concern about Kosovo's judiciary, which continues to be inefficient and vulnerable to undue interference; encourages the Kosovar authorities to improve the implementation of existing instruments to safeguard the independence of the justice system; welcomes the government's commitment to following the Venice Commission's opinion on the concept paper on the vetting of judges and prosecutors, in close cooperation with the EU;

10. Welcomes the positive steps taken towards reforming Kosovo's public administration and encourages the government to intensify its efforts to create a professional, depoliticised and citizen-oriented civil service;
11. Regrets the fact that legislative work has been negatively affected by a polarised political atmosphere and difficulties in achieving a quorum; calls on the relevant stakeholders to improve the management of the legislative agenda and urges the members of the opposition to cease the practice of abstaining;
12. Welcomes the fact that there have been some successful operations targeting organised crime, but notes with regret that limited progress has been made in investigating and prosecuting such cases; is concerned about the challenging situation regarding the fight against organised crime in the north of Kosovo;

Fundamental freedoms and human rights

13. Notes that Kosovo has the necessary institutional set-up for the promotion and protection of human rights; underlines, however, that there must be more commitment to prioritising human rights and ensuring accountability and adequate sanctions for violations;
14. Welcomes Kosovo's lively and pluralistic media environment, but deplores the derogatory statements and smear campaigns aimed at investigative journalists; is particularly concerned about the lack of freedom of expression in the north of Kosovo; strongly condemns the recent attacks on journalists in Kosovo's northern municipalities;
15. Reiterates its call for the financial sustainability and independence of media outlets to be ensured in order to eliminate political influence; calls for greater transparency on media ownership with a view to enhancing media independence and pluralism;
16. Encourages the government to enhance its cooperation with civil society on decision-making; stresses the importance of increasing accountability and transparency in relation to public funding for civil society organisations;
17. Deplores the many cases of femicide and gender-based and sexual violence; calls on the government to step up its efforts to combat domestic and gender-based violence and improve the protective and preventive measures in place;
18. Welcomes the government's approval of a draft law amending and supplementing the Criminal Code, which introduces tougher penalties for domestic violence, sexual harassment and rape;
19. Is concerned about cases of discrimination and hate speech against ethnic minorities, LGBTIQ+ people, refugees and displaced persons; reiterates its call for the intensification of efforts to provide minority groups with equal opportunities;
20. Underlines the importance of ensuring that persons with disabilities have equal access to education, health services, public buildings and transport;

Reconciliation and good neighbourly relations

21. Commends Kosovo's engagement in a number of regional cooperation initiatives and encourages it to step up its reconciliation efforts and seek solutions to past disputes;
22. Regrets the fact that the initiatives to involve the Serb community in Kosovo's political, social and economic structures remain very limited; calls on the Government of Kosovo and the representatives of Kosovo Serbs to commit to genuine dialogue in order to increase mutual trust;
23. Reiterates its full support for the EU Special Representative for the Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue; calls on Kosovo and Serbia to engage in this dialogue in good faith and in the spirit of compromise to achieve a comprehensive, legally binding agreement on the normalisation of their relations, based on mutual recognition, in accordance with international law; calls for the full implementation of all the relevant agreements, including the establishment of the Association/Community of Serb-Majority Municipalities;
24. Condemns all actions that endanger stability and jeopardise the reconciliation process, including the tensions in North Kosovo, and recalls the shared responsibility for peace and the rule of law for all people in Kosovo;
25. Welcomes the recent agreements in the framework of the Berlin Process;

Socio-economic reforms

26. Reiterates the necessity of carrying out structural reforms in order to boost competitiveness and ensure inclusive and sustainable economic growth; welcomes the progress made in tackling the informal economy;
27. Expresses concern over the low labour market participation of young people, women and ethnic minorities; encourages Kosovo to prioritise reducing the skills mismatch and to improve the availability and affordability of early childhood education and care;
28. Welcomes the launch of the education strategy for 2022-2026, which, for the first time, has the use of digital technology to improve services and quality in education as one of its five strategic objectives;
29. Welcomes the progress made in digitalising the economy;
30. Calls on the government to improve the conditions for social dialogue and collective bargaining, and emphasises the importance of constructive and inclusive social dialogue in strengthening economic resilience and promoting social justice;
31. Urges the government to ensure better access to healthcare services and to speed up its work on the introduction of a universal health coverage scheme;
32. Welcomes the agreement at the Tirana Summit on reduced roaming costs;
33. Regrets the limited progress made on consumer policy; calls on Kosovo to pursue further alignment with the EU *acquis* on consumer protection and to step up its efforts in raising awareness of consumer rights;

34. Takes note of the first annual IPA III programme, which is worth EUR 63.96 million and will support measures targeting the rule of law and human rights, good governance, socio-economic development, energy and the environment;

Energy, environment, sustainable development and connectivity

35. Stresses the importance of taking action to address the climate and environment emergency by reducing fossil fuel dependency; urges the government to implement the climate change strategy and the associated action plan;
36. Welcomes the Commission's energy support package to help the Western Balkans overcome the energy crisis; calls on the Kosovar authorities to make the best use of this assistance in order to build a resilient and environmentally friendly energy system;
37. Regrets the fact that Kosovo has failed to adopt the long-announced energy strategy for 2022-2030, and calls for the immediate adoption and implementation of both this strategy and the law on renewable energy sources; welcomes the adoption of a roadmap for the implementation of the 2013 and 2015 energy agreements regarding the supply of electricity in four Serb-majority municipalities in the north of Kosovo;
38. Calls for urgent action to tackle air pollution and soil and water contamination; urges Kosovo to comply with emission ceilings and increase environmental mainstreaming in different sectoral policies;
39. Regrets the inadequate response to Kosovo's growing waste management issues;
-
- ◦
40. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the President of the European Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the governments and parliaments of the Member States and the President, Government and National Assembly of Kosovo.