










Procedure file

Basic information		
INI - Own-initiative procedure	2019/2172(INI)	Procedure completed
Report on the 2019-2020 Commission Reports on Kosovo		
Subject 8.20.01 Candidate countries		
Geographical area Kosovo under UNSCR 1244/1999		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	 Foreign Affairs	 CRAMON-TAUBADEL Viola Shadow rapporteur  MANDL Lukas  SCHIEDER Andreas  KYUCHYUK Ilhan  RIVIÈRE Jérôme  DZHAMBAZKI Angel	30/09/2019

Key events			
19/12/2019	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
23/02/2021	Vote in committee		
03/03/2021	Committee report tabled for plenary	A9-0031/2021	Summary
25/03/2021	Results of vote in Parliament		
25/03/2021	Debate in Parliament		
25/03/2021	Decision by Parliament	T9-0113/2021	Summary
25/03/2021	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2019/2172(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Annual report
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 54
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	AFET/9/01988

Documentation gateway					
Committee draft report		PE647.076	17/11/2020	EP	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE648.335	15/12/2020	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A9-0031/2021	03/03/2021	EP	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T9-0113/2021	25/03/2021	EP	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary		SP(2021)409	01/09/2021	EC	

Report on the 2019-2020 Commission Reports on Kosovo

The Committee on Foreign Affairs adopted an own-initiative report by Viola VON CRAMON-TAUBADEL (Greens/EFA, DE) on the 2019-2020 Commission reports on Kosovo.

Commitment to enlargement

The report welcomed Kosovo's continued commitment to advance on its European path and the support of the Kosovar population for European integration. It regretted, however, the limited progress in implementing the first phase of the European reform programme, while acknowledging the government's commitment to a comprehensive reform process as foreseen by the second phase of the programme. It called on the Kosovar authorities to show greater political will and strengthen administrative capacity in order to step up the implementation of EU-related reforms.

Members welcomed the peaceful and orderly conduct of the early parliamentary elections on 6 October 2019 but regretted that Kosovo continues to struggle with political instability after the elections. They also regretted that in 2020 the Council had still not managed to adopt visa liberalisation for Kosovo.

EU Member States were called upon to show continued commitment to enlargement and to pursue a more effective communication policy towards EU citizens on enlargement.

Democracy and the rule of law

While welcoming the progress made in adapting the legal framework to the rule of law, Members stressed that Kosovo needs to step up its efforts in the fight against corruption and organised crime, and needs to build strong, coherent and independent institutions to address these problems.

The report called on Kosovo to improve the implementation of its regulatory measures relating to the freezing, confiscation and recovery of assets, as well as to final convictions in cases of high-level corruption, organised and financial crime, money laundering and terrorist financing. It also recalled that non-merit-based selection and appointment to senior positions in the civil service and public enterprises remains a major concern.

Respect for fundamental freedoms and human rights

While Kosovo's legal and institutional framework broadly guarantees the protection of human, minority and fundamental rights, Members pointed out that challenges remain in its implementation, particularly with regard to language rights.

The report called for greater protection and inclusion of persons belonging to minorities and for greater efforts to combat discrimination and anti-gypsyism. It also noted that the financial and editorial freedom of the public broadcaster is not ensured and recalled the need to ensure full transparency of media ownership.

Members called on the Kosovar authorities to create an environment conducive to better representation of women in decision-making positions, calling in this respect for the participation of women in the negotiating team responsible for the Belgrade-Pristina dialogue. They reiterated their concern about the extent of domestic and gender-based violence, stressing that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a detrimental impact on women and minorities by deepening inequalities and exacerbating existing problems.

Economy

Members considered that strong political support, effective implementation and close monitoring are needed to tackle Kosovo's informal

economy, which is a serious obstacle to the development of its private sector and affects the state's ability to provide good quality public services. They expressed their concern about the massive emigration of highly skilled workers from Kosovo and called on the Commission and the Western Balkan countries to develop a regional strategy to tackle persistent youth unemployment.

Environment, energy and transport

Members are seriously concerned about the coal-dependent energy system and the continuing high rate of premature deaths due to air pollution resulting from emissions exceeding the legally established ceilings for large combustion plants. They urged the Kosovo authorities to tackle air pollution immediately and to develop a credible plan to phase out coal in a cost-effective manner.

Kosovo should align itself with the EU's climate protection and environmental standards and policy objectives, in line with the priorities of the European Green Deal.

Reconciliation and good neighbourly relations

The report welcomed Kosovo's efforts to maintain constructive neighbourly relations throughout the region and to proactively align itself with the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). It stressed that the normalisation of relations between Serbia and Kosovo is a priority and a precondition for the accession of both countries to the EU and would also be essential to ensure stability and prosperity in the whole region.

Members reiterated their support for the initiative to establish the Regional Commission for the establishment of facts about war crimes and other gross human rights violations on the territory of the former Yugoslavia (RECOM).

Report on the 2019-2020 Commission Reports on Kosovo

The European Parliament adopted by 471 votes to 109, with 104 abstentions, a resolution on the 2019-2020 Commission reports on Kosovo.

Commitment to enlargement

Parliament welcomed Kosovo's continued commitment to advance on its European path and the support of the Kosovar population for European integration. It called on the Kosovar authorities to show greater political will and strengthen administrative capacity in order to step up the implementation of EU-related reforms.

Members welcomed the peaceful and orderly conduct of the early parliamentary elections on 6 October 2019, but deplored the lack of freedom of expression in the Serbian community in Kosovo and the fact that Kosovo continues to struggle with political instability after the elections. They also called on the Council to urgently adopt a visa-free regime for Kosovo citizens.

EU Member States were called upon to show continued commitment to enlargement and to pursue a more effective communication policy towards EU citizens on enlargement.

Democracy and the rule of law

While welcoming the progress made in adapting the legal framework to the rule of law, Members stressed that Kosovo needs to step up its efforts in the fight against corruption and organised crime, and needs to build strong, coherent and independent institutions to address these problems.

The resolution called on Kosovo to improve the implementation of its regulatory measures relating to the freezing, confiscation and recovery of assets, as well as to final convictions in cases of high-level corruption, organised and financial crime, money laundering and terrorist financing. It also recalled that non-merit-based selection and appointment to senior positions in the civil service and public enterprises remains a major concern.

Kosovo is invited to improve the fight against the financing of terrorism, as well as the reintegration of foreign fighters, to launch an effective programme for the confiscation or voluntary handing over of illegal weapons held by citizens to the police, and to improve coordination and exchange of information between Kosovo and EU security services in order to counter possible terrorist activities

Respect for fundamental freedoms and human rights

While Kosovo's legal and institutional framework broadly guarantees the protection of human, minority and fundamental rights, Members pointed out that challenges remain in its implementation, particularly with regard to language rights.

Parliament called for greater protection and inclusion of persons belonging to minorities and for greater efforts to combat discrimination and anti-gypsyism. It also noted that the financial and editorial freedom of the public broadcaster is not ensured and recalled the need to ensure full transparency of media ownership.

Members called on the Kosovar authorities to create an environment conducive to better representation of women in decision-making positions, calling in this respect for the participation of women in the negotiating team responsible for the Belgrade-Pristina dialogue. They reiterated their concern about the extent of domestic and gender-based violence, stressing that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a detrimental impact on women and minorities by deepening inequalities and exacerbating existing problems.

The resolution stressed the importance of combating violence against children while noting the need to fully implement the existing framework to combat discrimination against LGBTI persons.

Economy

Members considered that strong political support, effective implementation and close monitoring are needed to tackle Kosovo's informal economy, which is a serious obstacle to the development of its private sector and affects the state's ability to provide good quality public services. They called for the urgent introduction of active labour market policies, significant improvements in education and a regional strategy to tackle persistent youth unemployment.

Kosovo is called upon to strengthen the health sector in order to provide adequate and accessible basic health services to all citizens. The resolution highlighted the adoption of more than EUR 138 million in assistance for Kosovo, of which EUR 50 million were reallocated to

address the disastrous socio-economic consequences of the COVID-19 crisis.

Environment, energy and transport

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Kosovo should align itself with the EU's climate protection and environmental standards and policy objectives, in line with the priorities of the European Green Deal.

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The resolution welcomed Kosovo's efforts to maintain constructive neighbourly relations throughout the region and to proactively align itself with the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). It stressed that the normalisation of relations between Serbia and Kosovo is a priority and a precondition for the accession of both countries to the EU and would also be essential to ensure stability and prosperity in the whole region.