

Kosovo's ProgressBAR in 2022

An 8-dimensional assessment of key policy areas

GOOD NEIGHBOURLY RELATIONS

HEALTH

EDUCATION

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

ECONOMY

DEMOCRATISATION

HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS

RULE OF LAW

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Balkans Policy Research Group (BPRG)

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ACRONYMS

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| AIS | Agency of Information and Society |
| ALB | Albania |
| ALP | Active Labour Market Policies |
| APC | The Agency for Prevention of Corruption |
| BCP | Border Crossing Point |
| BiH | Bosnia and Herzegovina |
| BPRG | Balkans Policy Research Group |
| CEC | Central Election Commission |
| CEFTA | Central Europe Free Trade Agreement |
| CEPEJ | The European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice |
| CERP | Competitiveness and Export Readiness Project |
| CMIS | Case Management Information System |
| CO₂ | Carbon Dioxide |
| CPC | Criminal Procedure Code |
| CPI | Corruption Perception Index |
| CRM | Common Regional Market |
| CSO | Civil Society Organisation |
| CVE | Countering Violent Extremism |
| ECAP | Election Appeal and Complaint Panel |
| EnC | Energy Community |
| ENQA | European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education |
| ERA | European Reform Agenda |
| ERP | Economic Reform Program |
| EU | European Union |
| FDI | Foreign Direct Investment |
| FTF | Foreign Terrorist Fighters |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| GMO | Genetically Modified Organisms |
| GoK | Government of Kosovo |
| GWh | Gigawatt hours |
| HUSCK | Hospital and university Clinical Service of Kosova |
| ICT | Information and Communication Technology |
| CAA | Kosovo Accreditation Agency |
| KEC | Kosovo Education Centre |
| KESP | Kosovo Education Strategic Plan |
| KIESA | Kosovo Investment and Enterprise Support Agency |
| KIPA | Kosovo Institute for Public Administration |
| KJC | Kosovo Judicial Council |
| KLI | Kosovo Law Institute |
| KPC | Kosovo Prosecutorial Council |
| KPST | Kosovo Pension Saving Trust |
| KSA | Kosovo Statistics Agency |
| LGBTIQ+ | Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex, Queer + |
| LPO | Law on Public Officials |
| MARRI | Migration, Asylum, Refugee Regional Initiative |
| MECs | Municipal Election Commissions |

| | |
|---------------|--|
| MESTI | Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation |
| MMWP | Municipal Waste Management Plans |
| MNE | Montenegro |
| MOJ | Ministry of Justice |
| MP | Member of Parliament |
| MVP | Monitoring and Verification Platform |
| MWh | Megawatt hours |
| NAO | National Audit Office |
| NCSD | National Council for Sustainable Development |
| NECP | National Energy Climate Plan |
| NERP | National Emission Reduction Plan |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organisations |
| NMK | North Macedonia |
| NPEC | National Energy Climate Plan |
| NPISAA | National Program for Implementation of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement |
| NZB | Nearly Zero Energy Building |
| OSCE | Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe |
| OUFN | Organisational Units for Fines and Punishments |
| PAR | Public Administration Reform |
| PEFA | Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability |
| PFM | Public Finance Management |
| PHC | Primary Health Care |
| PIFC | Public Internal Financial Control |
| PISA | Programme for International Student Assessment |
| PKEE | Municipal Energy Efficiency Projects |
| PSCs | Polling Station Committees |
| RAE | Roma Ashkali and Egyptian |
| RCC | Regional Cooperation Centre |
| RoL | Rule of Law |
| RTK | Radio Television of Kosovo |
| RYCO | Regional Youth Cooperation Centre |
| SAA | Stabilisation and Association Agreement |
| SAI | State Audit Institution |
| SDGs | Sustainable Development Goals |
| SEECF | South East European Cooperation Process |
| SIGMA | Support for Improvement in Governance Management |
| SMEs | Small and Medium Enterprises |
| TCT | Transport Community Treaty |
| TFEU | Treaty of Function of European Union |
| TIP | Trafficking in Persons |
| ToT | Training of Trainers |
| UCCK | University Clinical Center of Kosovo |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| VET | Vocational Education and Training |
| WB | Western Balkans |
| WBF | Western Balkans Fund |

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Kosovo has been working towards the rule of law, promoting democratic principles, and aligning with key priorities of the European Union (EU) to foster a prosperous statehood. It passed a new law on fundamental rights and freedoms, made some progress in the fight against terrorism, signed over 20 regional bilateral agreements, and aimed at a functioning market economy. Additionally, it increased international cooperation and made efforts to meet Energy Community requirements.

Yet, many challenges remain. The macroeconomic stability and implementation of economic reforms in line with the EU standards remain key issues, along with poverty and aligning education with the labour market. Institutions need to strengthen measures to attract investments and ensure sustainable development. The lack of administrative capacities compromises the qualitative management and functioning of the institutions, and it requires urgent action to ensure the effective implementation of laws and policies.

In 2022, Kosovo adopted and amended several laws and strategies, although their implementation remains a constant challenge. Many of them were contested by the parliamentary opposition, and the international community, and the process of amendments or adoption of laws was often delayed. Bylaws and responsive plans are necessary to define key goals and concrete actions for the efficient implementation of the legal framework. The efficiency of courts needs to increase as well, especially in clearing the backlog of cases, to ensure timely justice, fairness, legal certainty, and public trust.

Kosovo needs to boost its efforts for meaningful progress on EU-related agendas. It should increase efforts to fight corruption and organised crime, promote and protect fundamental rights, especially freedom of expression, freedom of religion, freedom of association, and children's rights, improve political stability, increase employment, and reduce informal employment. Some of the most immediate priorities for the upcoming period include improving the legal framework on energy, diversifying the energy supply, improving the air quality and forest management, improving the quality of education and healthcare, as well as increasing participation in regional initiatives and accelerating progress in the dialogue with Serbia.

RULE OF LAW - Some progress was made on the Rule of Law in 2022. This marks an improvement from the "limited" progress assessed in 2021. Positive developments are noted on access to justice, international cooperation, and transparency, but challenges remain with resolving cases efficiently, clearing the backlog of cases, and increasing public satisfaction with the judiciary. The legal framework of the Fight Against Corruption and asset declaration improved, while the number of registered cases decreased. Progress in the Fight Against Organised Crime was mixed, with improvements in prosecution and adjudication but challenges with certain legal aspects and specific crime categories.

Judiciary - Efforts to monitor and ensure accountability through mechanisms, legal provisions, and public reports increased. The Rule of Law Strategy and its Action Plan were successfully implemented, with over 50% of the scheduled tasks completed, while no data was available on the implementation of KPC and KJC Strategic Plans. Access to justice marked very good progress, as most of the requests for free legal aid and all requests of women victims of domestic violence for shelter were approved. All crimes reported against members of the LGBTIQ+ community were brought before justice, while no data was available on the number of crimes against minorities. Progress has also been noted on efficiency and effectiveness, and enhanced international legal cooperation, with 11 international agreements signed to align procedures and bolster legal collaboration in criminal cases. However, no progress was noted in the number of resolved cases by the courts and in removing the backlog of cases. Transparency has improved with very good progress with the publication of annual reports on the work of courts and prosecution, but limited progress on publishing reports on the nature of complaints against judges. Independence and impartiality marked good progress as a result of the efficiency of the Court of Appeal in resolving 95% of the received cases. The number of women judges and the budget for the KPC and KJC slightly increased. However, the increase in public satisfaction with the work of the judiciary from 2021, remained limited.

Fight Against Corruption - The legal framework improved with the revision of the Criminal Procedure Code and the Law on Political Party Financing, the adoption of the Law on the Agency for Prevention of Corruption, and the adoption of the Law on Declaration, Origin, and Control of Assets and Gifts. The number of cases dealt with by the Agency for Prevention of Corruption (APC) increased by 65% in 2022, and 98.7% of officials declared their assets, thus contributing to the prevention of corruption. Prosecution improved with all 5 registered cases being prosecuted, but the number of registered cases was 50% lower than in 2021, while no data was available for adjudication and guilty verdicts. The level of corruption in public institutions improved only by 5% compared to 2021.

Fight Against Organised Crime - Some progress was noted on the legal framework for the fight against organised crime with the revision of the Criminal Procedure Code and the adoption of the Strategy and Action Plan against Trafficking in Persons. However, no progress was made on amending the Law on Prevention of Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism. The Law on Cybersecurity and the Strategy and Action Plan on Countering Violent Extremism was not adopted, and the Strategy and Action Plan organised crime was not implemented.

Some progress was noted in the measures against organised crime. 85.2% of organised crime cases were prosecuted, marking an increase of 59% from 2021. Adjudication and guilty verdicts also increased with final court verdicts on 34.4% of all cases. However, the number of registered cases of organised crime decreased by 26.3% compared to 2021. The number of investigated drug-related cases decreased by 6.06% compared to 2021, while other measures against drug-related cases improved with 50% of cases prosecuted, 30.83% of them adjudicated and 29.31% of them ending in guilty verdicts. No data was available on the confiscation of drugs. Investigation of money laundering cases increased by 56% compared to 2021, while limited progress was made on prosecution and adjudication of cases with only 5 indictments out of 48 cases, and 9 rulings, 7 of which were guilty verdicts. The number of registered cases of trafficking in persons (TIP) increased only by 4.34% from 2021 but their prosecution was at a good level with 49 indictments out of 96 cases. Adjudication and guilty verdicts made limited progress from 2021, with court verdicts on 20 out of 96 cases of all cases, and guilty verdicts in all but one of them. Investigation of cases of terrorism and violent extremism increased by 71.4% in 2022 with 12 registered cases, 10.4% of which were prosecuted, and most of them adjudicated, marking limited progress. The Joint Threat Assessment Centre has not been established. Kosovo's level of organised crime was quite high in the Global Organised Crime Index in 2021, but the Index provides no data for 2022 to compare the progress.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS - The progress on human rights and fundamental freedoms in 2022 is 'limited', with improved civil liberties scores but no progress on freedom of expression, religion, or association. While the current legislature has a record number of women MPs, representation remains low in decision-making positions in the government and the private sector. Discrimination against ethnic minorities and the rights of the LGBTIQ+ community persist. Economic, social, and cultural rights made limited progress with disparities in labour market reforms, delayed adoption of the Law on Minimum Wage, and challenges in equal access to education. Property rights issues remain and despite alignment of the laws in force with the EU acquis, implementation is lacking.

Civil and Political Rights - Kosovo made limited progress on its score on civil and political liberties compared to 2021, with an increase of 22% on political rights, and 3.3% on civil liberties. Freedom of expression, freedom of religion, and freedom of association made no progress compared to 2021. The current legislature has 40 women MPs, the highest since 2008, yet representation remains low in decision-making positions in government and the private sector. Although a good legislative framework is in place and the Constitutional Court is effective in protecting constitutional rights, ethnic minorities continue to face discrimination on the ground. No progress was made on protecting children's rights either. Despite the law in place, nearly 23% of children in 2022 lived in poverty and child mortality is four times higher than the EU average. Progress on protecting the LGBTIQ+ community was limited. Discussions on related sensitive topics have become more common than in the previous year, but discrimination persists, and the Civil Code continues to exclude same-sex marriages from legal recognition.

Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights - Limited progress was noted on economic, social, and cultural rights. While legal provisions are in place to protect the right to work, they lack implementation. Additional reforms to address labour market disparities are necessary. The Law on Minimum Wage was approved in the first reading but was not adopted. Implementation of equal access to education is lacking despite some efforts to engage professionals in helping children with special needs in regular schools. Access to education remains a concern due to the late identification, lack of support by health education systems, and widespread exclusion from schools. No progress is noted on property rights. Issues persist particularly related to the non-enforcement of inheritance rights. The Freedom House Index for 2022 ranks Kosovo with the lowest score on the ability to exercise the right to own property and establish a private business without interference.

Legal framework - The legal framework on human rights and fundamental freedoms improved with the adoption of the Law on Property Rights of Foreign Citizens, but no progress was made in adopting the Law on Religious Freedoms and the new Law on Gender Equality. The Law on Child Protection aligns with the EU acquis and five new Administrative Instructions were developed. Child Rights Teams were established in 11 municipalities to train child protection service providers. Yet, implementation of

the legal provisions remains limited.

DEMOCRATISATION - The progress on Democratisation was limited. Levels of progress vary between its main indicators including Media and Civil Society, Political Stability, Elections, and Public Administration. Some progress was noted on the Freedom of Media, including a merit-based election process for the Public Broadcaster, and improved civil society financing. Yet, challenges persist with continued political influence, intimidation of journalists, and lack of legal framework amendments. Limited progress was observed on Security and Public Order, and the Constitutional and Legal Order faced challenges in effective implementation. The functioning of institutions did not improve, with operational challenges in the Assembly, non-functional independent institutions, and decreased public satisfaction with the government. No elections occurred in 2022, but some progress was made on the legal framework for Elections. The Public Administration Reform showed slight improvement, especially in Public Finances, but challenges in administrative capacities persist. Digitalisation improved service delivery and increased public service satisfaction, while the Legal Framework on salaries and public officials faced controversies.

Media and civil society – Some progress was made on the freedom of media as a result of the merit-based election process for the Public Broadcaster (RTK) and training programs provided by the Agency for the Prevention of Corruption (APC), with the help of external donors. However, the score in the Freedom House Index on free and independent media remained the same, and the political influence, harassment, and intimidation of journalists persisted. The number of cases of threats and attacks against journalists and media increased by 14% compared to 2021. The Government made efforts to improve Civil Society (CSO) public financing by appointing public funds coordinators in public central institutions. Some progress was made in CSO consultations via an online platform and the promotion of consultation platforms through social networks and online publications. Yet, online consultations at the municipal level lagged behind those at the central level. No progress was made on the legal framework. The Law on Independent Media Commission and the Law on RTK were not amended, and the implementation of the Law on Access to Public Documents is lacking.

Political stability – The progress on Security and Public Order was limited. The World Bank's data do not indicate a high risk of violence and terrorism, and 3 fewer cases of inter-ethnic violence were reported compared to 2021. The readiness to join protests for political reasons decreased by 36.7% and no data is available on the acts of terrorism. Relations between the Government and the opposition improved slightly, but significant disagreements persisted and affected the voting on legislative proposals. Assembly members often abstain from voting and fail to properly manage the legislative agenda. Progress in the constitutional and legal order is limited too as the effective implementation of several laws is lacking. The Constitutional Court found violations of the constitutional order in 16 out of 20 cases, while no data is available on the violation of the legal order by political parties.

No progress was made on the functioning of institutions. Despite maintaining a strong majority in the Assembly, the Government faces challenges with cooperation and agreement within the majority. The Assembly made efforts to initiate the adoption of laws and appointments in public bodies but encountered challenges due to the absence of a decision-making quorum. 18 independent institutions were left non-operational or partially operational due to the Assembly's failure to elect board members. Parliamentary oversight over the government's activities and independence of institutions was nearly non-existent. People's satisfaction with the work of the government also decreased by 24.5% compared to 2021. Public data on the implementation of the key laws monitored by the Assembly is not available.

Elections - No elections took place in 2022, resulting in no data for certain sub-indicators, such as Election Day; Vote Counting; Results; Campaign Environment (competitive campaigning, access to media, COVID-19 measures); Political Environment; and Women's Participation (women's representations, and visibility of women candidates in campaigns). However, some progress was noted on the legal framework of elections with the adoption of the amended Law on the Financing of Political Entities. Additionally, 15 Central Election Commission (CEC) regulations were reviewed and incorporated with the recommendations of the EU, OSCE, and various local and international observers. Limited progress was made in the Voter Register with slight improvements in the cooperation between EU election observation missions (EOM) and religious institutions in reporting deaths, aiming at the automatic removal of deceased persons from the civil register. No progress was noted on amending the Law on General Elections and the Law on Local Elections.

Public administration reform – The functioning of public administration slightly improved in 2022, yet many challenges remain. The Independent Civil Service Oversight Board continued to operate, although with five members only, and the Ombudsperson was efficient in issuing recommendations

to administrative institutions. Kosovo was ranked marginally higher on appointments, dismissals, and merit-based recruitment of civil servants compared to last year. However, administrative capacities remain weak and compromise the qualitative management and functioning of the institutions.

Good progress was made on public finances. The central procurement authority regularly publishes reports on the implementation of public procurement policies, yet specific reports for each institution are not published. The Government adopted a new Public Finance Management (PFM) strategy and the concept document for the new law on PFM was approved. However, the implementation of the PFM Strategy and Action Plan is progressing slowly. Progress on budgetary transparency was limited. Despite the availability of budgetary information, proactive engagement, accessibility of specific reports, and consultation with CSOs are lacking.

Some progress was made on service delivery, considering the alignment of sectoral laws with the Law on General Administrative Procedure, and digitalisation of public services. As a result, public satisfaction with public services increased by 26% compared to 2021. Yet, the Ministerial Council on Public Administration Reform failed to coordinate line ministries, and there are no reports on the quality of the mechanisms in place for ensuring the quality of public services. The framework of public service digitalisation is also in its initial phases of development.

The legal framework improved with the adoption of the Law on Salaries, however, the law raised concerns among the opposition about the unknown coefficient value and other provisions addressing citizens' needs and demands. The Law on Public Officials was adopted but strongly opposed by the opposition and criticised by the EU office in Prishtina for violating and politicising the civil service, and for not incorporating in the law comments of the EU, and OECD/SIGMA. The Law on Organisation and Functioning of the Administration and Independent Agencies is not consistently implemented and alignment of internal regulations of institutions with the law is progressing slowly. The implementation of the Law on General Administrative Procedure remains limited as well, with inefficient public administration reforms in place.

ECONOMY - Economic Development in 2022 has shown limited progress. Macroeconomic Stability improved to some extent with an increase in GDP growth and GDP per capita. However, government revenues increased marginally, and the trade balance worsened. In the business environment, structural business statistics show limited progress and the informal economy remains a concern. Investments saw a positive trend as FDI inflows increased. Limited progress was made on employment and safety at work, with a drop in unemployment, mostly due to migration, but an alarming increase in fatal work accidents. Human capital data, including migration, is unavailable. No progress is noted about new labour and socio-economic council laws, implementation of the Sectoral Strategy 2018-2022, or the adoption of a new strategy.

Economic Development - The GDP growth increased by 14.5% compared to 2021, and the GDP per capita increased by 13.95%. Government revenues increased by only 5.54% from 2021, and the Trade Balance negatively increased by 21% with imports exceeding exports. Structural business statistics show limited progress and some short-term statistics partially align with the EU Acquis, although their availability is limited. No progress was noted on the gap between newly registered and terminated firms. The ratio between 2021 and 2022 was only 6.66%. A significant concern persists regarding the informal economy, which stands at 30%, the same as last year.

FDI inflows showed good progress, reaching EUR 732 million, indicating a 74% increase from 2021. No progress was reported on the reorganisation of the Kosovo Investment and Enterprise Support Agency (KIESA). The Assembly passed two laws in the first readings, aiming to establish the restructuring of KIESA into an Agency for Support to Enterprises within the MIET, and the establishment of the Agency for Investment and Export (AIE) under the Office of the Prime Minister.

Limited progress was made on employment and safety at work. Health insurance policy values increased by 29% compared to 2021, while no specific data is available on the number of workers covered by health insurance. A public health insurance system is lacking, and the Draft Law on Health Insurance has not been amended. The level of unemployment dropped by 39% from 2021. This may largely be attributed to the flow of migration of skilled workers. No progress was made on fatal incidents at work, as the number of accidents increased by 66.6% from 2021.

The new Law on Labour, and the Law on the Socio-Economic Council to improve the capacities of the council, its decision-making, and overall performance, were not adopted. The implementation of the Sectoral Strategy 2018-2022 was weak, and the government did not adopt the new Sectoral Strategy. No data is available to measure the flow of migration in 2022.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT - Limited progress was noted on sustainable development. Minimal progress is evident on Energy, with a 42% decrease in imported electricity, a 13.9% reduction in commercial losses, and a 1.5% decrease in electricity produced by coal. Progress on renewable energy and energy efficiency investments was limited, while reliance on coal remained nearly identical. Environmental progress was also limited, with effective real-time monitoring of air quality, yet persistent pollution posing health risks. Water and land management slightly improved, with 99% of the population having access to drinking water, but insufficient consolidation and protection of land. Waste management improved but forest management deteriorated with a 51% increase in deforestation. The legal framework slightly improved with the adoption of the Law on Waste, but strategies and plans were not adopted or implemented.

Energy – Limited progress was made on energy supply, with a 42% decrease in imported electricity, compared to 2021. Commercial losses decreased by 13.9%, and limited progress was noted on investment in renewables and energy efficiency. No progress was noted in reducing reliance on coal. Electricity produced from coal decreased only by 1.5% compared to 2021. Some progress was noted on energy efficiency with operational procedures in place to subsidise energy efficiency measures in the residential sector, initiated municipal projects, and establishment of the Platform for Monitoring Energy Savings under the Law on Energy Efficiency. No data is available for specific investments in residential buildings and no progress was made on power plants as efforts to enhance the environmental performance of the Kosovo B thermal power plant were postponed to 2024. Renewable energy was produced 46% more than in 2021. However, investments in renewables were limited and no progress was noted on plans for alternative sources of energy. The Legal Framework did not improve either. The Energy Strategy, the plan for gradual adjustment of energy tariffs, and the National Energy and Climate Plan were not adopted.

Environment - The real-time monitoring of air quality is effective and accessible, while persistent pollution continues to pose a significant health threat. The Air Quality Index places Kosovo in the 69th position out of 118 countries regarding air pollution. The adoption of the national Emissions Reduction Plan has been delayed, and no progress has been made in complying with the emissions ceilings. Coal-fired plants continue to play a crucial role in generating electricity.

Water and land management improved with 99% of the population having access to drinking water. Water supply increased from 2021 by only 0.25%. Consolidation and protection of land remains insufficient, and no progress has been made in managing water resources and addressing water pollution. The amount of water decreased by 6.3% compared to 2021, and the identification of sensitive areas under the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive falls short.

Waste management improved with 18 out of 38 municipalities having integrated municipal waste management plans, and a decrease of 36% in illegal dumpsites compared to 2021. No progress was noted in setting up new locations for landfills as the government still needs to carry out the procedures for environmental and social impact assessments. Forest management did not improve either. Deforestation increased by 51% compared to 2021, with no measures in place to manage tree loss, and reforestation decreased by 64% from the previous year.

The Legal Framework improved slightly with the adoption of the Law on Waste in line with the Waste Framework Directive. However, the Climate Change Strategy was not implemented, and the Action Plan on Climate Change Strategy and the Forestry Law were not adopted.

EDUCATION - Kosovo made limited progress on education for the reporting period. Spending on education showed positive trends in research and infrastructure, with a 90.3% increase in the latter, but no progress on allocating sufficient budget for children with disabilities and education. Access to education faced challenges, with a modest increase in student graduates but a decline in higher education enrolment. Governance issues persisted, including delays in the adoption of the law on textbooks and political interference in school principal recruitment. No progress was noted in alignment with the labour market, as the curricula lacked vocational skills, and vocational training lacked consistent work-based learning.

Educational Provision - Spending on research reached EUR 182,086 and spending on infrastructure and investment increased by 90.3%, marking very good progress compared to 2021. However, spending on children with disabilities and the allocation of the budget for education constitutes only 3.7% of the overall budget. The number of student graduates increased by only 16.4% compared to 2021, while the number of students enrolled in higher education decreased by 8.55%. The number of assistants for children with special needs decreased from 86 in 2021 to 69 in 2022 and the number of dropouts among the RAE community increased from 53 to 86. The dropout rate among girls increased as well by 33.4%,

and no new preschools were made available in 2021/2022.

In September 2022, the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA) attained affiliated member status with the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA). However, performance in PISA 2022 decreased by 11 points compared to PISA 2021. The draft law on textbooks has not been presented to the Assembly yet and recruitment of school principals continues to face government influences and political interference. No progress was made in curricula alignment and vocational training. The current subject-based curricula do not prioritise the development of vocational skills, and the vocational training curriculum does not systematically deliver work-based learning.

HEALTH - Progress in Health was limited. Healthcare capacities improved with new infrastructure, ambulances, hospital beds, and equipment, however, the number of hospital beds and personnel increased minimally. Access to Healthcare showed no improvement, the public health information system remained non-functional, the e-health system lacked additional functionalities, and the number of specialised doctors decreased. No progress was made on the Quality of Healthcare, with a marginal increase in patient satisfaction and perceived corruption affecting healthcare. New health-related laws and strategies were not adopted.

Public Health - No progress was made on a universal healthcare scheme, and the public health information system remains non-functional. The e-health system records certain patient data but additional functionalities like pathology and radiology are pending. The number of specialist doctors decreased by 2% compared to 2021, while no data is available for health expenditures in 2022. Patient satisfaction in healthcare increased by only 22.2% from 2021, and 71.7% of respondents believed that healthcare was affected by corruption.

Progress in vaccination against COVID-19 was reported in different units in 2021 and 2022, hence progress is unmeasurable. Healthcare capacities improved, with the new Vaccine Warehouse, 5 purchased ambulances for Primary Health Care, 675 hospital beds, clinics, and general hospitals through the JUCA grant, the activated Pediatric Surgical Hospital, and supplied equipment for acute emergency services across 34 municipalities.

The number of hospital beds increased by only 0.13% and personnel increased by only 12.1% compared to 2021. Expenses for treatment abroad decreased by 40.62% compared to 2021. No progress was made on the adoption of the new Law on Health Insurance, the Health Promotion and Education Strategy, and the implementation of the Action Plan of Health Promotion and Education Strategy.

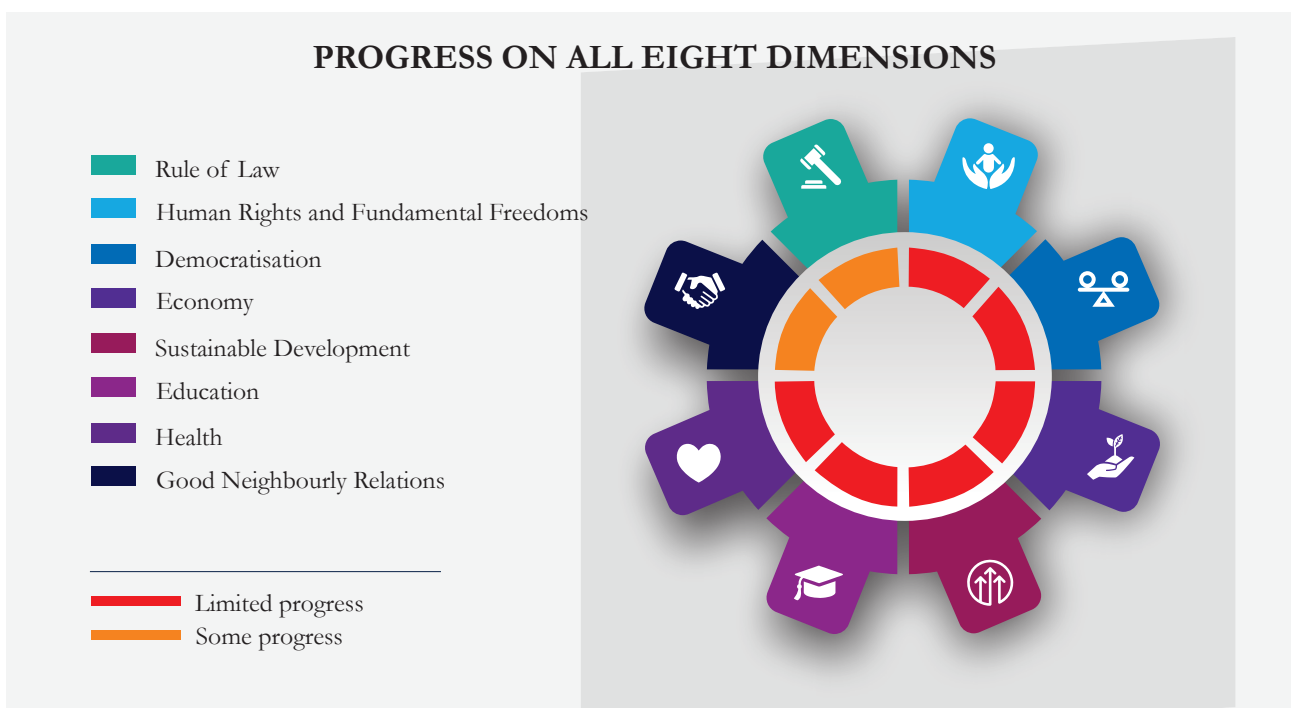
GOOD NEIGHBOURLY RELATIONS - Some progress was noted in building Bilateral Relations. Kosovo strengthened ties with Albania, Montenegro, and North Macedonia, signing 19 agreements and enhancing implementation mechanisms. However, challenges persisted in developing formal relations with Bosnia and Herzegovina, and minimal progress was made in the Kosovo-Serbia dialogue, particularly on issues related to Common crossing points and missing persons.

Cooperation - Kosovo improved its relations with Albania, Montenegro, and North Macedonia. 19 agreements were signed with Albania and their implementation improved due to the establishment of an intergovernmental coordination secretariat. Several meetings took place between prime ministers and foreign ministers of Kosovo and Montenegro, as well as North Macedonia. No formal relations have developed with Bosnia and Herzegovina yet. Some progress was noted in the number of signed agreements, with 3 agreements signed between the prime ministers of the WB6 countries. Kosovo was the first country to ratify the three agreements, but several other decisions agreed at the technical level remain blocked.

Kosovo has actively participated in discussions related to 15 CEFTA Joint Committee Decisions and 1 CEFTA Additional Protocol. Among these, 4 decisions are ready for adoption, 3 are near completion, and 6 are in the final stages of text discussions. The Joint Committee, which serves as CEFTA's primary decision-making body, has not adopted any of the planned decisions for 2022. No progress is evident on the Strategy for membership and participation in new organisations. The government did not develop a strategic approach for the country's membership and participation in new organisations and initiatives. Also, no progress was noted in memberships, as Kosovo did not manage to join any regional organisations or regional initiatives.

Kosovo and Serbia maintained an ongoing dialogue through regular monthly meetings. Yet, there has been minimal progress in implementing the agreements. Serbia committed to opening both entry and exit lanes at Common Crossing-Points (CCP) Merdare and to relocate their authorities to the new premises at CCP Mutivode. However, progress was lacking in addressing the issue of missing persons. During the

reporting period, the countries engaged in negotiations on a political declaration concerning Missing Persons, but no agreements were reached.



INTRODUCTION

The progress of Western Balkan (WB) countries in fulfilling EU -related criteria- as part of their respective paths towards EU integration -is evaluated yearly by the European Commission (EC) through country reports. These reports primarily focus on the extent to which countries implement important reforms in the area of the rule of law (RoL), fundamental freedoms, the functioning of democratic institutions including public administration reform, and socio-economic development, which comprise the ‘fundamentals first’ in the accession track.

For Kosovo in particular, a number of other documents determine its relations with the European Union (EU). Kosovo signed the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) with the EU in October 2015, opening a new chapter in EU-Kosovo relations.¹ The government introduced the National Programme of the Implementation of SAA (NPISAA), which marked a purely national document with short and midterm priorities distributed along three blocks; Political Criteria, Economic Criteria and European Standards.² In November 2016, the EU and Kosovo introduced a joint initiative, the European Reform Agenda (ERA), aimed to concretise the actions necessary to implement the SAA.³

As an aspiring EU candidate country, much of Kosovo’s progress is inevitably linked to the implementation of EU-related reforms. While the European Commission’s report offers a solid overview of Kosovo’s yearly progress, there is a necessity for a more comprehensive review to reflect the country’s development in all key areas. Hence, this report is much broader and more detailed than the EU’s country report. It assesses institutions’ progress along eight key policy dimensions: the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms, democratisation, economy, sustainable development, education, health and good neighbourly relations. This is done by incorporating 14 indicators, 65 sub-indicators and 234 means of assessment.

The indicators provide an empirical approach to measuring Kosovo’s progress in critical policy areas. In most instances, the progress is reported quantitatively. In other instances, and due to the nature of the indicators, the progress is reported qualitatively, which mostly stands for legislation and its implementation. While the indicators are rooted in international norms and standards and may be used in other contexts, these are country-specific and do not aim to instruct how assessments may be carried out in other contexts.

¹ Balkans Group report, Kosovo 2020: A Complex Agenda for the New Government, 17 December 2019; and Stabilisation and Association Agreement, 27 October 2015, at <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2015/10/27/kosovo-eu-stabilisation-association-agreement/>.

² Balkans Group report, Kosovo 2020: A Complex Agenda for the New Government, 17 December 2019.

³ Kosovo – European Reform Agenda (ERA), February 2017.

METHODOLOGY AND CHALLENGES

Through this report, Balkans Group aims to present Kosovo institutions' yearly progress in meeting EU-related criteria in all key sectors by monitoring, reporting and promoting SAA and ERA.

This report differs from the European Commission's country report in both methodology and substance. Driven by the aim to better measure Kosovo's progress and bring more data to the surface, Balkans Group has developed a monitoring instrument consisting of 8 dimensions: Rule of Law, Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, Democratisation, Economy, Sustainable Development, Education, Health and Good Neighbourly Relations. This structure is further divided into thirteen (13) indicators and sixty-five (65) sub-indicators, which use means of assessment, means of verification, and sources of verification from a variety of local, regional and international sources using both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. By comparing the data with the previous year, the report measures the progress made in the reporting year in form of numbers and percentages. (See Fig. 1 for more clarity on the dimension, indicators, sub-indicators and means of assessment). By offering simplified and easily understandable data, Balkans Group seeks to turn these indicators into a platform of information for citizens and policymakers regarding Kosovo's progress in key sectors. Moreover, based on this methodology, Balkans Group has further developed a section 'Progress in numbers' which evaluates on a scale from 0-4 the overall progress in a specific dimension, indicator, sub-indicator or means of assessment.

To establish these indicators, various documents have been used such as the EC's yearly Country Report, the European Reform Agenda and the Stabilisation and Association Agreement. Although the list of indicators is long, they are by no means exhaustive and are not intended to be used in measuring progress in other settings. Also, if certain policy areas or dimensions have not been included in this report, it does not mean that they are not important or that Kosovo's progress in those particular areas is not monitored by the EU. Rather, the list of indicators may be expanded in future years and they may also be modified to adapt to new circumstances arising in the future.

The methodology can be summarised as follows:



For each dimension, a number of indicators and sub-indicators are provided followed by means of assessment—that is how progress on the specific indicator and sub-indicator is to be measured, and the source of verification—that is where the research team looks at when collecting the data.

- For the majority of sub-indicators progress is measured using a four-point scale ranging from 0 - no progress, 1 – limited progress, 2 – some progress, 3 – good progress, and 4 – very good progress.
- An average score for the indicator is derived by taking the average score of progress made from each of the sub-indicators of that particular indicator. For instance, if indicator X has three sub-indicators each scoring 0, 2, and 2, the final score for that indicator will be $(0+2+2)/3 = 1.3$ (limited progress). The same will apply when obtaining an aggregate score for a particular dimension if needed. If dimension Y has four indicators each scoring 1, 0, 3, and 1, the overall score of progress for that dimension will be $(3+0+3+1)/4 = 1.75$ (some progress).
- For other sub-indicators, progress is dichotomous either 0 – no progress, or 4 - very good progress. This is particularly the case with legal framework where the research question concerns only the adoption or not of a specific law or regulation.
- In cases where the expectation is that the indicator or sub-indicator has improved, progress is measured compared to the previous year's progress.
- Each dimension and indicator also includes an overall qualitative statement illustrative of progress made for that particular dimension or indicator. Both score-based results and statement-based results can only be generated once data have been collected.

The collection of data for the purpose of this report has been very challenging, mainly due to the following reasons:

- Lack of aggregated data on the specific indicators, sub-indicators or means of assessment from Kosovo institutions.
- The unresponsiveness of the institutions, which led to numerous attempts to access what should have been publicly available data.
- The delayed publication of data, i.e., data for X year is compiled or published at the end of the following year.

To mitigate the challenges in this process, Balkans Group recommends the following actions:

- Better inter-institutional cooperation in data management and sharing;
- Increase institutions' responsiveness;
- Improve data management, quality and the routine of publication;

Balkans Group will continue to publish the same quality reports annually.

THE 8 DIMENSIONAL ASSESSMENT OF KOSOVO'S PROGRESS

| Dimension | Indicator | Sub-Indicator | Means of Assessment |
|-------------|-------------------------------|---|--|
| RULE OF LAW | JUDICIARY | Efficiency and Effectiveness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resolved Cases - Backlog of cases - Application of CMIS - International legal cooperation |
| | | Independence and Impartiality | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public confidence in the work of the judiciary - Impartiality of judges/ prosecutors - Tenure of judges/ prosecutors |
| | | Accountability | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Performance monitoring for judges - Discipline - Performance monitoring for prosecutors - Publicly available reports on court spending |
| | | Transparency | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Publication of annual reports - Nature of complaints and how they were solved - Court proceedings' openness to the public |
| | | Access to Justice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provision of free legal aid - Provision of shelter to women victims of domestic violence - Marginalised groups (minorities and LGBTI) |
| | | Administration of Justice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of Judges and Prosecutors - Women's representation - Professional staff - KJC and KPC management - Budgetary resources |
| | | Legal Framework | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rule of Law Strategy and Action Plan - KPC and KJC Strategic Plans |
| | FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION | Public Perception of Corruption | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Level of corruption in public institutions |
| | | Prevention | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agency for Prevention of Corruption (APC) - Declaration of assets - Conflict of interest |
| | | Measures against High-Level Corruption | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Investigation - Prosecution - Adjudication - Guilty verdicts - Track record mechanism |
| | | Confiscation of Assets | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Value of final confiscated assets - Value of sold assets - Confiscation Fund |
| | | Legal Framework | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Revision of Criminal Procedure Code - Anti-Corruption legal package - Revision of Law on Political Party Financing |
| | FIGHT AGAINST ORGANISED CRIME | Level of Organised Crime | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Overall level of organised crime |
| | | Measures Against Organised Crime | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Investigation - Prosecution - Adjudication - Guilty verdicts |
| | | Drugs/ Narcotics | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Investigation - Prosecution - Adjudication - Guilty verdicts - Confiscation of Drugs |
| | | Money Laundering | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Investigation - Prosecution - Adjudication - Guilty verdicts |
| | | Fight Against Terrorism and Violent Extremism | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Investigation - Prosecution - Adjudication - Guilty verdicts - Joint Threat Assessment Centre |
| | | Trafficking in Persons | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Investigation - Prosecution - Adjudication - Guilty verdicts |
| | | Legal Framework | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategy and Action Plan against Organised Crime - Criminal Procedure Code - Law on PREVENTION OF Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism - Law on Cybersecurity - Strategy and Action Plan against TIP - Strategy and Action Plan on CVE |

| | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS | FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS | Civil and Political Rights | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overall level of civil and political rights - Freedom of expression - Freedom of religion - Freedom of association - Gender equality - Minority rights - Children's rights - Marginalised groups |
| | | Economic, Social and Cultural Rights | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Right to work - Property rights - Access to education |
| | | Legal Framework | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Law on Religious Freedom - Law on Property Rights - Law on Gender Equality - Law on Child Protection |
| DEMOCRATISATION | MEDIA AND CIVIL SOCIETY | Freedom of Media | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Free and independent media - Harassment of journalists - Public Broadcaster - Protection of Whistle-blowers |
| | | Civil Society | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CSO consultations - Promotion of consultation platforms - CSO public financing |
| | | Legal Framework | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Law on Independent Media Commission - Law on RTK - Law on Access to Public Documents |
| | POLITICAL STABILITY | Functioning of Institutions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Functioning of the Government - Functioning of the Parliament - Functioning of independent institutions - Public satisfaction with the work of the government - Oversight - Implementation of laws |
| | | Security and Public Order | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Absence of violence and terrorism - Inter-ethnic violence - Acts of terrorism - Readiness to join protests for political reasons |
| | | Relations Between Government and Opposition | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Democratic transfer of power - Opposition presence in Parliament - Opposition support to Government |
| | | Constitutional and Legal Order | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implementation - Violation of constitutional order - Other violations by political parties |
| | ELECTIONS | Election Administration | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transparency of CEC - Voter register - Election day - Vote counting - Results |
| | | Campaign Environment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Competitive campaigning - Access to media - Covid-19 measures - Political environment |
| | | Legal Framework | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Law on General Elections - Law on Local Elections - Law on Financing of Political Entities - Amendment of CEC regulations |
| | | Women's Participation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Women's representation - Visibility of women candidates in campaigns |
| | PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION REFORM | Functioning of Public Administration | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appointments, dismissals and merit-based recruitment - Dismissals - Independent civil society oversight board - Ombudsperson |
| | | Service Delivery | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quality of public services (central level) - Digitalisation - Municipal services |
| | | Public Finances | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public procurement procedures - Budget transparency - Public finance management reform |
| | | Representation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Women's representation - Representation of minority communities |
| Legal Framework | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Law on Salaries - Law on Public Officials - Law on Organisation and Functioning of State Administration - Harmonisation of laws with the Law on General Administrative Procedure | |
| ECONOMY | ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT | Macroeconomic Stability | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GDP growth - GDP per capita - Trade balance - Revenues |
| | | Business Environment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gap between newly registered and terminated firms - Informal economy - Statistics |
| | | Investment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Flow of FDI - Reorganisation of KIESA |

| | | | | |
|--|----------------------|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| | | Employment and Safety at Work | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Health insurance - Fatal incidents at work - Level of unemployment | |
| | | Human Capital | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Flow of migration - Human capital | |
| | | Legal Framework | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategy on Employment and Social Policy - Law on Labour - Law on Socio-Economic Council | |
| SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT | ENERGY | Energy Supply | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reliance on coal - Commercial loss - Security of supply - Planning and investments | |
| | | Energy Efficiency | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Energy Efficiency Fund - Power plants - Energy efficiency in residential buildings - Energy efficiency projects in municipalities - Monitoring energy savings - Stats on CO2 emissions | |
| | | Renewable Energy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Investments - Energy from renewable sources - Energy from alternative sources of energy | |
| | | Legal Framework | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Energy Strategy - Adjustment of energy tariffs - Integrated NECP | |
| | ENVIRONMENT | Air Quality | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Air quality plans - Compliance with emission ceilings - Ban on coal for heating - Real-time monitoring | |
| | | Water and Land Management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Water supply - Management of water resources - Drinking water - Water pollution - Land quality | |
| | | Waste Management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Integrated municipal waste management plans - Illegal dumpsites - Setting up new locations for landfills | |
| | | Forest Management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deforestation - Measures against deforestation - Reforestation | |
| | | | Legal Framework | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Climate Change Strategy - Action Plan on Climate Change Strategy - Harmonisation of Law on Waste - Forestry Law |
| | EDUCATION | EDUCATIONAL PROVISION | Spending on Education | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public and private spending on education - Expenditure per student - Spending on children with disabilities - Spending on research - Spending on infrastructure and investment |
| Access to Education | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student enrolment - Graduation rate - Special needs children - Drop-out rate among RAE - Drop-out rate among girls - Pre-school | |
| Governance and Quality of Education | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PISA Evaluations - Textbooks and curricula - KAA membership in ENQA - Appointment of school principals | |
| Alignment with Labor Market | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Curricula alignment - Vocational training | |
| HEALTH | PUBLIC HEALTH | Access to Healthcare | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Universal healthcare scheme - Public health information system - Health expenditures - Specialist Doctors | |
| | | Quality of Healthcare | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Patient satisfaction - Corruption in healthcare | |
| | | Legal Framework | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Law on Health Insurance - Health Sector Strategy - Health Promotion and Education Strategy | |
| | | COVID-19 Management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vaccination - Healthcare capacities | |
| | | Infrastructure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hospital beds - Personnel - Expenses for treatment abroad | |
| GOOD NEIGHBOURLY RELATIONS | COOPERATION | Bilateral Relations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relations with ALB - Relations with MNE - Relations with NMK - Relations with BiH | |
| | | Regional Cooperation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agreements signed - CRM - Green Agenda for WB - Strategy for membership in regional organisations - Membership in new organisations - Cooperation in regional initiatives | |
| | | Dialogue with Serbia | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EU-facilitated dialogue - Implementation of agreements - Missing persons | |



Dimension I

RULE OF LAW

Summary and Analysis

Rule of law is one of the key criteria for EU membership and rapprochement and one of the main principles of governance globally.⁴ It is one of the fundamental values of the EU, and a prerequisite for the protection of all the other values, including fundamental rights and democracy.⁵ Rule of law is critical for the very functioning of the EU; the effective application of EU law, the proper functioning of the internal market, maintaining an investment-friendly environment, and mutual trust.⁶

The Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA), Article 83, within the area of freedom, security and justice emphasises the importance of cooperation between the parties focused on:

- *strengthening the independence, impartiality and accountability of the judiciary in Kosovo and improving its efficiency;*
- *developing adequate structures for the police, prosecutors and judges and other judicial and law enforcement bodies to deal with and cooperate on civil, commercial and criminal matters and to effectively prevent, investigate, prosecute and adjudicate organised crime, corruption and terrorism cases.*⁷

The European Reform Agenda (ERA) I and, in its aftermath, the ERA II, have placed a particular focus on Good Governance and the Rule of Law (Pillar I), including the fight against organised crime and corruption.⁸

Within the rule of law dimension, three indicators are used:

1. Judiciary;
2. Fight against corruption; and
3. Fight against organised crime.

These indicators are used to measure progress among the most fundamental aspects of criminal justice institutions, such as the police, courts and prosecution and the extent to which key legislation pertaining to RoL is adopted, amended and implemented.

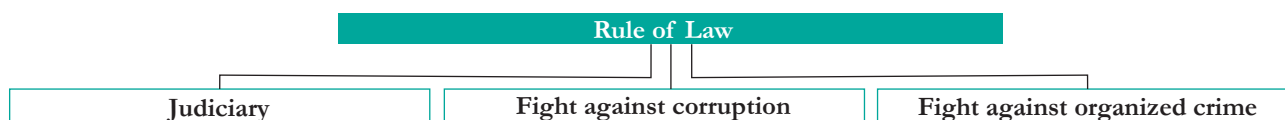


Figure 2. Rule of law and its indicators

1. Judiciary

A well-functioning judiciary, with effectively implemented decisions, is of the highest importance for the maintenance and enhancement of the rule of law.⁹ The judiciary is one of the key areas of the rule of law, often used interchangeably to refer to the latter.

To measure the progress within the judiciary, the following sub-indicators are used:

- efficiency and effectiveness* - whether courts and prosecution are capable of meeting their responsibilities in an efficient and timely manner;
- independence and impartiality* - whether courts are free from undue influence, judges are unbiased, and citizens have trust in legal institutions;
- accountability* - whether there are measures to monitor and evaluate the work of judges and prosecutors and take actions/measures in cases of their non-performance;

4 United Nations, What is the Rule of Law, at <https://www.un.org/ruleoflaw/what-is-the-rule-of-law/> and Government of Kosovo, National Programme for Implementation of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (NPISAA), 2016, at https://kryeministri.rks-gov.net/repository/docs/National_Programme_for_Implementation_of_the_Stabilisation_and_Association_Agreement.pdf.

5 European Commission, Upholding the Rule of Law, at https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/upholding-rule-law_en#:~:text=The%20rule%20of%20law%20is,for%20fundamental%20rights%20and%20democracy.

6 Ibid.

7 Council of the European Union, Stabilisation and Association agreement between the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community, of the one part, and Kosovo*, of the other part, 2 October 2015, at <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-10728-2015-REV-1/en/pdf>.

8 Kosovo – European Reform Agenda (ERA) II, 2020.

9 Venice Commission of the Council of Europe, The Rule of Law Checklist, March 2016, at https://www.venice.coe.int/images/SITE%20IMAGES/Publications/Rule_of_Law_Check_List.pdf.

- d) *transparency* - whether there is publicly available information about the work of legal institutions;
- e) *access to justice* - the extent to which vulnerable groups have access to free legal aid and receive protection;
- f) *administration of justice*; and
- g) *legal framework*.

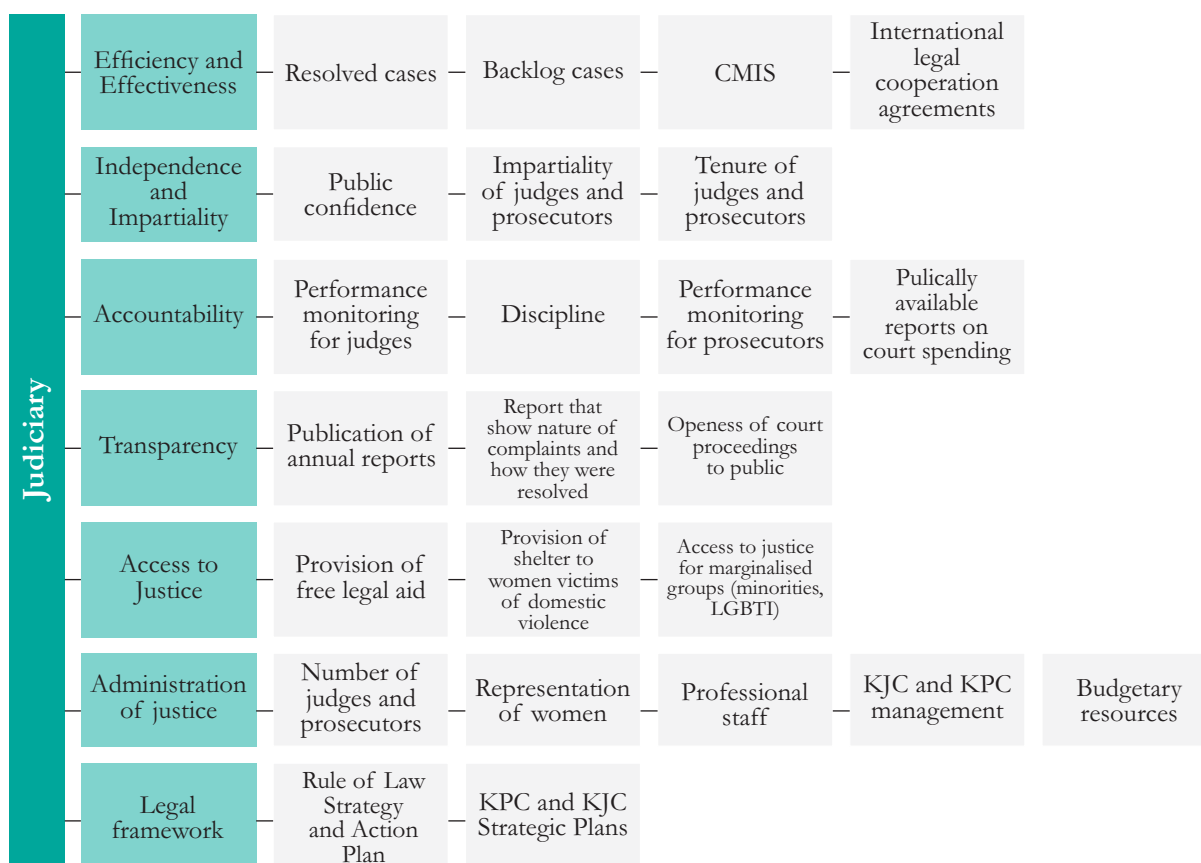


Figure 3. Judiciary and its sub-indicators

a) Efficiency and effectiveness

The means of assessing the efficiency and effectiveness of courts include:

- *resolved cases*;
- *backlog of cases*;
- *application of the Case Management Information System (CMIS)*;
- *international legal cooperation*.

Resolved cases

In 2022, courts resolved 120,409 out of 380,494 cases.¹⁰ Whereas, in 2021, courts resolved 112,168 out of 336,969 cases.¹¹ There was an 8% decrease in the ratio between resolved and unresolved cases in 2022, compared to 2021. **No progress**

¹⁰ KJC, Statistical Report on Courts, 2022.

¹¹ KJC, Statistical Report on Courts, 2021.

| Year | 2021 | 2022 |
|--------------|---------|---------|
| Resolved | 112,168 | 120,409 |
| Unresolved | 224,801 | 260,085 |
| Ratio | 50% | 46% |
| Decrease (%) | 8% | |

Table 1. Ratio between resolved and unresolved court cases

Backlog of cases

In 2021, courts inherited a 174,275 backlog of cases (unresolved cases) from previous years.¹² In 2022, this number increased by 36%.¹³ **No progress**

| Year | 2021 | 2022 |
|------------------|---------|---------|
| Backlog of cases | 174,275 | 229,404 |
| Increase (%) | | 31.6% |

Table 2. The percentage of backlog of cases

The courts achieved a higher resolution rate in 2022, but their performance in reducing the backlog of cases was less effective than in 2021.

Application of Case Management Information Systems (CMIS)

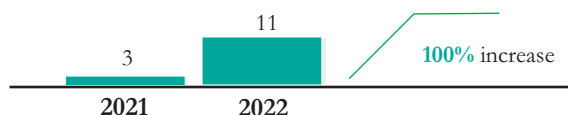
The application of the Case Management Information System (CMIS) now includes the Commercial Court as well. The court commenced registering new cases and transferring cases from other courts. CMIS has completed the criteria for automatically distributing cases to basic courts and has initiated the implementation of the Fourth Phase (transitional phase), which will span three years.¹⁴

Three hundred and twenty-five (325) individuals employed in the judicial system were trained and re-trained on the use of CMIS. The KJC, by decision, removed all manuals in the courts and replaced them with electronic records in CMIS.¹⁵

In addition, advanced statistical reports have been developed using CMIS, including the number of unresolved cases, age of pending cases, duration of procedures, and number of sessions held for resolved cases]. They also include European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ) indicators for measuring and evaluating judges and court performance.¹⁶ **Good progress**

International legal cooperation

In 2021, the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) signed 3 agreements.¹⁷ In 2022, the number increased to 11 agreements which establish a legal foundation, align procedures, and enhance legal collaboration in criminal cases between Kosovo and the partner states. They include provisions for the establishment of joint investigative teams, evidence collection, remote testimony via videoconferencing, spontaneous information sharing, covert investigations, freezing, seizing, and confiscating crime proceeds and associated tools, as well as asset-sharing and data exchange.¹⁸ **Very good progress**

Figure 4. The number of international legal agreements signed¹⁹

Some progress was made in efficiency and effectiveness in 2022.

¹² Annual Statistical Report of the Courts, 2021.

¹³ Annual Statistical Report of the Courts, 2022.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Balkans Group interview with an official from the Ministry of Justice, Prishtina, January 2022.

¹⁸ Balkans Group interview with an official from the Ministry of Justice, Prishtina, September 2023.

¹⁹ Note: The three agreements signed in 2022 include five agreements with Switzerland, France, and Slovenia on criminal cases. As well as five agreements with Finland, Norway, and the UK on extradition and exchange of criminal data. Also in 2022, international legal cooperation was established with Latin American states and some of the EU non-recognizers countries.

b) Independence and Impartiality

Means of assessing the independence and impartiality of the judiciary include:

- *public confidence in the work of the judiciary* (courts and Prosecutor's Office);
- *impartiality of judges/prosecutors* - the ratio between the number of cases resolved by Appeals Court and the number of appeals made;
- *tenure of judges/prosecutors* - the number of judges and prosecutors appointed for fixed terms.

Public confidence in the work of the judiciary

In 2022, courts received the highest levels of public satisfaction ever recorded by Public Pulse in Kosovo, with 39.10% of respondents satisfied with their work.²⁰ This marks a 15.3% increase from 2021.

Satisfaction levels with the Office of the Prosecutor recorded in 2022 also increased from 2021 by 9.11%.²¹ **Limited progress**

| Year | Courts | | Prosecution | |
|---------------------|--------|--------|-------------|--------|
| | 2021 | 2022 | 2021 | 2022 |
| Satisfaction levels | 33.90% | 39.10% | 34.00% | 37.10% |
| Increase (%) | 15.3% | | 9.11% | |

Table 3. Public satisfaction with courts and prosecution

Impartiality of judges/prosecutors

The Court of Appeals had a high success rate in 2022 as it resolved 91.5% of the new cases it received, particularly 17,363 cases out of 18,973, leaving only 8.5% of cases unresolved.²² **Very good progress**

| Year | 2021 | 2022 |
|----------------|--------|--------|
| Appeals Made | 20,340 | 18,973 |
| Resolved Cases | 16,087 | 17,363 |
| Increase (%) | 79% | 91.5% |

Table 4. The Increase of resolved cases by the Court of Appeals to number of appeals

Tenure of judges/prosecutors

Based on the Constitution of Kosovo, Article 105 *'The initial mandate for judges shall be three years. The reappointment mandate is permanent until the retirement age as determined by law or unless removed in accordance with law'*. However, no legal provisions establish a specific time frame for the appointment of judges.²³

Good progress was made in independence and impartiality in 2022.

c) Accountability

The means of assessing the accountability of judges and prosecutors include:

- *performance monitoring for judges;*
- *discipline;*
- *performance monitoring for prosecutors; and*
- *publicly available reports on court spending.*

20 UNNP, Public Pulse Brief XXII, 5 July 2022, at <https://www.undp.org/kosovo/publications/public-pulse-brief-xxii>.

21 UNDP, Public Pulse Brief XXI, 28 July 2021, at <https://www.undp.org/kosovo/publications/public-pulse-brief-xxi>.

22 KJC, Statistical Report on Courts, 2022.

23 Balkans Group interview with an official from Kosovo Judicial Council, Prishtina, September 2023.

Performance monitoring for judges

Kosovo has performance guidelines and monitoring mechanisms in place to hold judges accountable for potential delays, backlog of cases, and/or absenteeism. The Commission for the Evaluation of Judges' Performance is made up of 12 members representing various courts, and a chairman elected from among the members of KJC.²⁴ It evaluates the performance of judges with a permanent mandate, judges with an initial mandate and those who are candidates for promotion. Judges elected for a new mandate are evaluated at the end of the initial 12-month training and their evaluation is based on the knowledge gained during the training. Permanent judges are randomly evaluated.²⁵ **Very good progress**

Discipline

Based on international standards, judges enjoy the security of tenure and are not subject to arbitrary removal from office, as a prerequisite for an independent judiciary.²⁶ Legal provisions in Kosovo meet these standards. More specifically, *'the President of the Republic of Kosovo based on a proposal by the respective Council shall decide to dismiss a judge or prosecutor and the proposal for dismissal by the respective Council should only be made in cases of a serious criminal offence, an international violation of law, or for serious neglect of duties by a judge or prosecutor'*.²⁷ **Very good progress**

Performance monitoring for prosecutors

The Commission for Evaluation of Prosecutors' Performance evaluates the performance of prosecutors.²⁸ In 2022, the government has adopted a concept document setting out its proposal to carry out a comprehensive vetting of judges and prosecutors.²⁹ **Very good progress**

Publicly available reports on court spending

The Kosovo Judicial Council (KJC) and the Kosovo Prosecutorial Council (KPC) publish general budgetary data in their annual reports (wages and salaries, goods and services, utilities and capital outlays), but they are not sufficiently detailed.³⁰ **Some progress**

Very good progress was made in accountability in 2022.

d) Transparency

The means of assessing the transparency of the judiciary include:

- *publication of annual reports (on the work of courts, prosecution, KPC and KJC);*
- *nature of complaints and how they were solved; and*
- *court proceedings' openness to the public.*

Publication of annual reports (on the work of courts, prosecution, KPC and KJC)

The annual reports for 2021 and 2022 were published.³¹ The KJC has also published the Annual Statistical Report of Courts for 2021 and 2022.³² **Very good progress**

Nature of complaints and how they were solved

The KJC published the annual report for 2022 on the number and resolution of complaints against judges. According to the report, the KJC handled 147 complaints (26 more than in 2021) against judges made by natural and legal persons, of which 116 were dismissed.³³ It also handled 22 new complaints in 2022, of which 2 were transferred from the previous year. Through investigation procedures, KJC issued

²⁴ KJC, Statistical Report on Courts, 2022.

²⁵ Commission for the evaluation of the performance of judges, at <https://www.gjyqesori-rks.org/komisioni-per-vleresimin-e-performances-se-gjyqtareve/?r=M&tabId=0>.

²⁶ European Court of Human Rights, Strengthening the confidence in the judiciary, 2019, at https://www.echr.coe.int/Documents/Seminar_background_paper_2019_ENG.pdf.

²⁷ See Article 8 of the Law No. 06/L-057 on Disciplinary Liability of Judges and Prosecutors, at <https://md.rks-gov.net/desk/inc/media/9C0BBF11-FCEE-407B-B070-C1105A070746.pdf>.

²⁸ See Regulation No. 05/2020 on the evaluation of prosecutors' performance, at <https://prokuroria-rks.org/assets/cms/uploads/files/9.pdf>.

²⁹ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 12 October 2022.

³⁰ KJC, Statistical Report on Courts, 2022 and Annual work report of the State Prosecutor 2022.

³¹ KJC, Annual Work Report, 2022.

³² Ibid.

³³ KJC, Annual Work Report, 2022.

18 measures including release from disciplinary responsibility, 2 written public reprimands, one non-public written reprimand and three temporary salary reductions up to 40%. Two judges were suspended from their jobs as a result of these complaints.³⁴

Not all courts publish information about the nature of complaints against judges and how they were resolved. For instance, while the Basic Court in Prishtina provides such information, the Basic Court in Mitrovica does not.³⁵ **Limited progress**

Court proceedings' openness to the public

Separate legal provisions for each department regulate court hearings publicity. All court sessions are open to the public, except in specific cases where the law dictates otherwise, such as in the Department for Juveniles or when handling family matters disputes.³⁶ **Very good progress**

Good progress was made in transparency in 2022.

e) Access to Justice

The means of assessing access to justice include:

- *provision of free legal aid;*
- *provision of shelter to women victims of domestic violence; and*
- *marginalised groups (LGBTIQ+ and minorities).*

Provision of free legal aid

In 2022, the Agency closed 3370 cases out of 5861, while 2491 others were in process. This ratio increased from last year by more than 100%.³⁷ **Good progress**

| Year | 2022 |
|----------------------------------|-------|
| Total number of cases (requests) | 5861 |
| Closed | 3370 |
| Percentage (%) | 57.5% |

Table 5. The percentage of cases for which legal aid was provided

Provision of shelter to women victims of domestic violence

In 2022, all 303 requests for shelter for women victims of domestic violence were approved, same as last year.³⁸ **Very good progress**

| Year | 2022 |
|--------------------------|------|
| Total number of requests | 330 |
| Provided shelter | 330 |
| Ratio | 1 |
| Percentage (%) | 100% |

Table 6. The ratio of women who requested shelter to those who were provided shelter

Marginalised groups (Minorities and LGBTIQ+)

In 2021, 8 crimes were reported against members of vulnerable groups (LGBTIQ+), 7 of which were brought before justice. In 2022, 5 crimes were reported, all of which were sent to prosecution.³⁹ **Very good progress**

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ For more, see <https://prishtine.gjyqesori-rks.org/vendimet-disiplinore/?r=M&cYear=2022> and <https://mitrovica.gjyqesori-rks.org/vendimet-disiplinore/?r=M&cYear=2022>.

³⁶ Law No. 06/L-054 on Courts, at <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=18302> and Law No. 03/L-006 on Contested Procedure, at <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDocumentDetail.aspx?ActID=2583>.

³⁷ Balkans Group interview with an official from the Agency for Free Legal Aid, September 2023.

³⁸ Balkans Group interview with an official from the Ministry of Justice, October 2023.

³⁹ Ibid.

| Year | 2022 |
|------------------------|------|
| Reported cases | 5 |
| Brought before justice | 5 |
| Ratio | 1 |
| Percentage (%) | 100% |

Table 7. The number of crimes against members of the LGBTIQ+ community brought before justice

No data were made available for the number of reported crimes against minority communities sent to prosecution in 2022.⁴⁰

Very good progress was made in access to justice in 2022.

f) Administration of Justice

The means of assessing the administration of justice include:

- *number of judges and prosecutors;*
- *women's representation (% of women judges and prosecutors);*
- *professional staff (in courts and prosecution);*
- *KJC and KPC management; and*
- *budgetary resources.*

Number of Judges and Prosecutors

The number of judges increased from 396 in 2021, to 422 in 2022.⁴¹ **Very good progress**

The number of prosecutors decreased from 182 in 2021 to 181 in 2022.⁴² **No progress**

| Year | 2021 | 2022 | Percentage |
|-----------------------|------|------|------------|
| Number of judges | 396 | 422 | 6.6% |
| Number of prosecutors | 182 | 181 | -0.5% |

Table 8. The number of judges and prosecutors

Women's representation

In 2022, the percentage of women judges increased by 3.904% compared to 2021. Out of 422 judges, 146 were women.⁴³ **Limited progress**

| Year | 2021 | 2022 |
|------------------------|-------|------|
| Total number of judges | 396 | 422 |
| Women judges | 132 | 146 |
| Ratio | 0.33 | 0.34 |
| Increase (%) | 3.90% | |

Table 9. The number of women judges

In 2022, the percentage of women prosecutors decreased by 2.3% compared to 2021. Out of 181 prosecutors, 76 were women.⁴⁴ **No progress**

Professional staff (in courts and prosecution)

In 2022, the number of professional staff in courts was 1303, which is 17.3% more than in 2021.⁴⁵ **Limited progress**

⁴⁰ Balkans Group interview with an official from Kosovo Police, Prishtina, October 2023.

⁴¹ KJC, Annual Statistical Report of Courts 2021 and KJC, Annual Statistical Report of Courts 2022.

⁴² Annual work report of the State Prosecutor 2022, Prishtina, February 2023 and Annual work report of the State Prosecutor 2021, Prishtina, February 2022.

⁴³ KJC, Annual Statistical Report of Courts 2021 and KJC, Annual Statistical Report of Courts 2022.

⁴⁴ Annual work report of the State Prosecutor 2022, Prishtina, February 2023 and Annual work report of the State Prosecutor 2021, Prishtina, February 2022.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

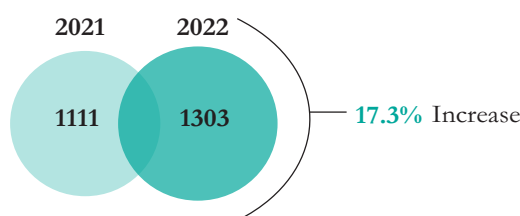


Figure 5. The number of professional staff in courts

The number of professional staff in 2022 was 662, which is 6.61% more than in 2021. **Limited progress**

| Year | 2021 | 2022 |
|------------------------------|-------|------|
| Number of professional staff | 621 | 662 |
| Increase (%) | 6.61% | |

Table 10. The number of professional staff in prosecution

KJC and KPC Management

The Kosovo Judicial Council (KJC) is composed of 13 members, 7 of whom are appointed through direct elections within the judiciary, whereas the remaining 6 members are chosen by the Assembly. Each member of the Council holds their position for 5 years. In 2022, the Council comprised 10 members, indicating that the Assembly of the Republic of Kosovo had not yet appointed 3 vacant positions.⁴⁷

Some progress

Budgetary Resources

KJC has budget forecasts outlining the main expenditures and sources of financing. The budget forecast for 2022 stood at EUR 31,400,365.10, which is 4.7% higher than in 2021.⁴⁸

The Committee on Budget, Finance and Personnel of the KPC conducted the working meetings in 2022, during which it reviewed and approved the Review of the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework 2023-2025, Review of the budget request for 2023 based on Budget Circular 2023/1 and Review of the budget request for 2023 according to Budget Circular 2023/2.⁴⁹ **Very good progress**

Some progress was made in administration of justice in 2022.

g) Legal Framework

The means of assessing the legal framework with regard to judiciary include:

- *Rule of Law Strategy and Action Plan; and*
- *KPC and KJC Strategic Plans.*

Rule of Law Strategy and Action Plan

The action plan for the implementation of the Strategy on Rule of Law has four strategic objectives, including 1) strengthening the judicial and prosecutorial system; 2) strengthening criminal justice; 3) strengthening access to justice; and 4) strengthening the fight against anti-corruption. These objectives are further divided into fifteen other specific objectives on which the Action Plan is based.⁵⁰

In 2022, the KJC outlined a total of 90 scheduled undertakings in the Action Plan, and successfully executed over half of them (51%). Currently, 38% of the activities are being carried out.

The KPC completed 57% of 63 planned initiatives, while 29% of the activities are in progress.⁵¹ **Very good progress**

⁴⁶ Balkans Group interview with an official from the Secretariat of Kosovo Prosecutorial Council, Prishtina, February 2022.

⁴⁷ KPC, Work Report for 2022.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Strategy on Rule of Law 2021-2026, July, 2021 at <https://md.rks-gov.net/desk/inc/media/8EF86336-E250-4EA2-9780-D4B8F7E853B5.pdf>.

⁵¹ Kosovo Law Institute at <https://kli-ks.org/efikasisiteti-ne-zbatimin-e-aktiviteteve-sipas-institucioneve-strategjia-e-sundimit-te-ligjit/>.

KPC and KJC Strategic Plans

The KJC developed a Strategic Plan for the Systematisation, Digitalisation and Automatization of Archives for the KJC.⁵² A working group started to draft the new Kosovo Prosecutorial Council Strategic Plan for 2022-2024. It also approved the Strategic Plan for The Improvement of Access to Justice 2022-2025.⁵³

The KJC approved the Strategic Plan for Improving of Access to Justice 2022-2025, which covers the Efficiency and Prioritization of Cases within the Judicial System. It also established the Commission responsible for monitoring, evaluating, and reporting on the Strategic Plan for Improving Access to Justice 2022-2025, as well as the Strategic Plan for the efficient resolution of corruption and organised crime cases 2022-2024.⁵⁴ However, there is no data for the implementation of these particular strategies.

The level of progress in the legal framework - Very good progress.

| Judiciary | No Progress | Limited Progress | Some Progress | Good Progress | Very Good Progress |
|-------------------------------|-------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Efficiency and Effectiveness | | | ✓ | | |
| Independence and Impartiality | | | | ✓ | |
| Accountability | | | | | ✓ |
| Transparency | | | | ✓ | |
| Access to Justice | | | | | ✓ |
| Administration of Justice | | | ✓ | | |
| Legal Framework | | | | | ✓ |
| The Overall Progress | | | | ✓ | |

Table 11. The overall progress for the Judiciary

Good progress was made in the Judiciary in 2022.

2. Fight against corruption

The fight against corruption is another key component when measuring a country's progress in the rule of law (RoL). As corruption undermines RoL and the stability of democratic institutions, a solid legislative framework and reliable institutions are required to underpin a coherent policy of prevention and deterrence of corruption.⁵⁵

The fight against corruption is placed under ERA II, Pillar I: Good Governance and Rule of Law I. Among others, the focus is on facilitating the process of tackling cases of high-level corruption, reducing the effect of the global pandemic on court hearings of criminal cases, adopting and fully implementing legislation on high-level corruption in line with the Venice Commission's opinions.⁵⁶ In addition, the fight against corruption is placed under Block I: Political Criteria in the Government's NPISAA.⁵⁷

- a) To assess whether Kosovo has achieved progress in meeting the fight against corruption criteria, these sub-indicators were used: a) *public perception of corruption*- information on the perception regarding the level of corruption in public institutions;
- b) *prevention*- data on conflict of interest cases, declaration of assets by politicians, and Agency for

52 KJC, Plan for the Systematisation, Digitalisation and Automatization of Archives for the Kosovo Judicial Council at https://www.gjyqesori-rks.org/wp-content/uploads/reports/74844_KGJK_Plani_Strategjik_per_digitalizimin_e_gjykatave_KGJK_2022_eng.pdf and KSJ, Strategic Plan for The Improvement of Access to Justice 2022-2025 at https://www.gjyqesori-rks.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/KJC_Strategic_Plan_on_Access_to_Justice_2022.pdf.

53 Balkans Group interview with an official from the Kosovo Judicial Council, Prishtina, September 2023.

54 Ibid.

55 Government of Kosovo, National Programme for Implementation of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (NPISAA), 2016, at https://kryeministri.rks-gov.net/repository/docs/National_Programme_for_Implementation_of_the_Stabilisation_and_Association_Agreement.pdf.

56 Kosovo-European Reform Agenda (ERA) II, 2020.

57 Government of Kosovo, National Programme for Implementation of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (NPISAA), 2016, at [National_Programme_for_Implementation_of_the_Stabilisation_and_Association_Agreement.pdf](https://kryeministri.rks-gov.net/repository/docs/National_Programme_for_Implementation_of_the_Stabilisation_and_Association_Agreement.pdf) (rks-gov.net).

Prevention of Corruption activities;

- c) *measures against high-level corruption*- information on the investigation, prosecution, adjudication, guilty verdicts, and track record mechanisms;
- d) *confiscation of assets*- data on confiscation funds, the value of confiscated assets and value of assets sold; and
- e) *legal framework*- whether laws and strategies have been adopted and/or are being implemented.

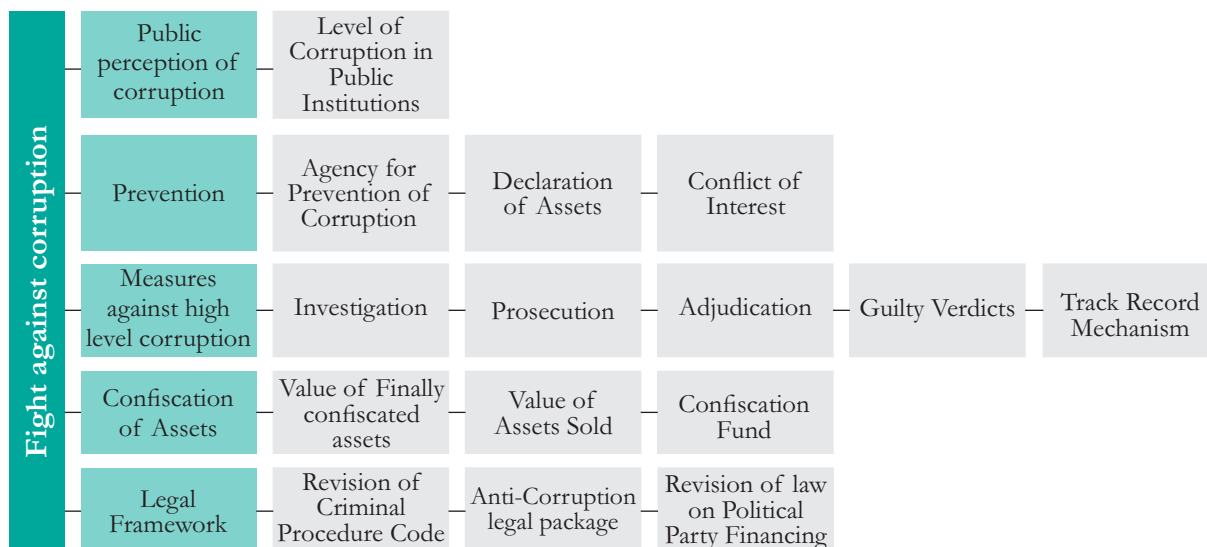


Figure 6. Fight against corruption and its sub-indicators

a) Public perception of corruption

The means of assessing the public perception of corruption include:

- *level of corruption in public institutions.*

Level of corruption in public institutions

The corruption perception index (CPI) score for Kosovo in 2022 was 41, which is a 5% increase from 2021.⁵⁸ **Limited progress**

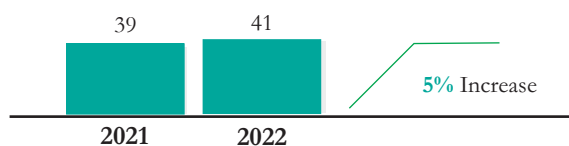


Figure 7. Level of corruption in public institutions

Kosovo (84th) and Montenegro (65th) stand better than other countries in the region with their scores in corruption in public institutions. Yet, the average CPI score for the WB remains lower (38.6) compared to the EU average (66) or the global average (43).⁵⁹

Limited progress was made in public perception of corruption in 2022.

b) Prevention

The means of assessing the prevention of corruption include:

- *the Agency for Prevention of Corruption (APC)*- or the number of cases dealt with by APC;

⁵⁸ Transparency International, Corruption Perception Index 2022 at https://images.transparencycdn.org/images/Report_CPI2022_English.pdf.

⁵⁹ Transparency International, Corruption Perception Index 2022 at https://images.transparencycdn.org/images/Report_CPI2022_English.pdf.

- *the declaration of assets (by officials); and*
- *conflict of interest- or the number of corruption-related cases sent for further criminal investigation.*

Agency for Prevention of Corruption (APC)

In 2022, the number of cases dealt by the Kosovo Agency for Prevention of Corruption was 619, which is 65% higher than in 2021.⁶⁰ **Good progress**

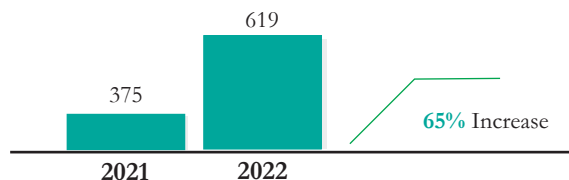


Figure 8. The number of cases dealt by APC

The Anti-Corruption Strategy and Action Plan 2021-2023 is in place from November 2020. The general objective of the strategy includes continuous legislative enhancements to strengthen the anti-corruption efforts and progress the adherence to the rule of law in Kosovo.⁶¹

Declaration of assets

All senior public officials have to declare their assets to the APC.⁶² In 2022, 4687 (98.7%) out of 4748 officials declared their assets, which is 1.02% higher than in 2021.⁶³ **Very good progress**

| Year | 2021 | 2022 |
|---|-------------|-------------|
| Number of Public Officials obliged to declare the assets | 4892 | 4748 |
| Number of officials declaring assets | 4783 | 4687 |
| Ratio | 0.97 | 1.02 |
| Increase (%) | | 1% |

Table 19. Declaration of assets

The system for declaring and assessing the origin of property belonging to senior public officials lacks sufficient staff, increased IT resources and training, the introduction of an electronic system for asset declaration, and transparency and accuracy in the process of monitoring and verification.⁶⁴

Conflict of interest

In 2021, APC investigated 375 cases, out of which, 150 were referred to the Prosecution Office and Police for further investigation, 2 to competent administrative bodies for initiation of the disciplinary proceeding, 71 cases were closed, and 152 cases were ongoing.⁶⁵

In 2022, APC investigated in total 619 cases of conflict of interest, of which 287 were addressed, 267 were sent for further investigation at the Prosecution Office and 65 were ongoing.⁶⁶ **Very good progress**

Very progress was made in prevention of corruption in 2022.

c) Measures against high-level corruption

The means of assessing measures against high-level corruption include:

- *investigation;*

⁶⁰ The Agency for Prevention of Corruption, Annual Work Report 2022, March 2023.

⁶¹ The Agency for Prevention of Corruption, Anti-Corruption Strategy 2021-2023, November 2020 at <https://kryeministri.rks-gov.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/ANG-Strategjia-Kunder-Korrupsionit-2021-2023.pdf>.

⁶² Assembly of Kosovo, Law No. 04/L-050 on Declaration, Origin and Control of Property of Senior Public Officials and one Declaration, Origin and Control of Gifts of all Public Officials, at <http://old.kuvendikosoves.org/common/docs/ligjet/Law%20on%20declaration%20of%20property%20of%20senior%20public%20officials.pdf>.

⁶³ The Agency for Prevention of Corruption, Annual Work Report 2022, March 2023.

⁶⁴ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 12 October 2022.

⁶⁵ The Agency for Prevention of Corruption, Annual Work Report 2021, March 2022.

⁶⁶ The Agency for Prevention of Corruption, Annual Work Report 2022, March 2023.

- *prosecution;*
- *adjudication;*
- *guilty verdicts (in relation to high-level corruption cases); and*
- *track record mechanism* - or whether the mechanism has included all high-level corruption cases.

Investigation

The institution of State Prosecutor holds a database with information on 84 registered cases of organised crime and corruption.

In 2022, 5 new cases of high-level corruption were registered and 8 indictments were made.⁶⁷ This represents a 50% decrease from last year in registered cases of high-level corruption.⁶⁸ **No progress**

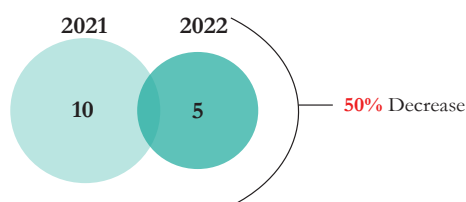


Figure 9. The number of registered high-level corruption cases

Prosecution

In 2022, all 5 registered cases of high-level corruption were prosecuted which is a higher ratio than that of 2021 (7 out of 10 cases).⁶⁹ **Very good progress**

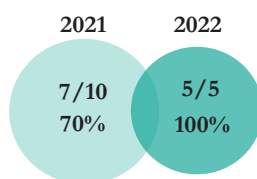


Figure 10. The number of prosecuted high-level corruption cases

Adjudication

No data was provided by the Kosovo Prosecutorial Council.

Guilty verdicts

No data was provided by the Kosovo Prosecutorial Council.

Track record mechanism

Initially, the State Prosecutor's database included only high-level cases, but then it was extended to cover all cases of corruption.⁷⁰ **Very good progress**

Good progress was made in measures against high-level corruption in 2022.

d) Confiscation of assets

The means of assessing the confiscation of assets include:

- *value of final confiscated assets;*
- *value of sold assets; and*

⁶⁷ State Prosecutor, Report on the work of State Prosecutor for first six-month period 2022, February 2023.

⁶⁸ State Prosecutor, Report on the work of State Prosecutor for first six-month period 2021, August 2022.

⁶⁹ State Prosecutor, Report of work 2022, February 2023.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

- *confiscation fund.*

Value of finally confiscated assets

In 2021, the value of confiscated assets was EUR 731,236.⁷¹ In 2022, this value reached EUR 1,022,427.41, which represents an increase of 40% from the previous year.⁷² **Some progress**

| Year | 2021 | 2022 |
|-----------------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Value of confiscated assets | 731,236 EUR | 1,022,427.41 EUR |
| Increase (%) | | 40% |

Table 13. Value of confiscated assets

Value of sold assets

In 2021, the value of assets sold was EUR 105,397.26.⁷³ In 2022, the value was EUR 44,507.20.⁷⁴ This represents a decrease by -57.7%. **No progress**

| Year | 2021 | 2022 |
|-----------------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Value of confiscated assets | 105,397.26 EUR | 44,507.20 EUR |
| Decrease (%) | | -57.7% |

Table 24. Value of assets sold

Confiscation Fund

In 2022, the Confiscation Fund was not established. Instead, a working group was established to supplement and amend the Law on the Management of Sequestered and Confiscated Assets, which will incorporate provisions on the confiscated funds.⁷⁵ **No progress.**

Limited progress was made in confiscation of assets in 2022.

e) Legal framework

The means of assessing the legal framework regarding the fight against corruption include:

- *revision of Criminal Procedure Code;*
- *anti-corruption legal package - the Law on the Agency for the Prevention of Corruption and the Law on Asset Declaration; and*
- *revision of Law on Political Party Financing.*

Revision of Criminal Procedure Code (CPC)

The Criminal Procedure Code (No. 08/L-032) was revised during 2021 and it was adopted on 17 August 2022.⁷⁶ The new Code extended the previous three-month rule which stipulated that criminal trials must recommence if no hearings take place during such period of time, to six (6) months.⁷⁷ **Very good progress**

Anti-Corruption Legal Package

The Law on the Agency for Prevention of Corruption (Law no 08/L-107) was adopted on 21 July 2022.⁷⁸ Additionally, the Law on Declaration, Origin and Control of Assets and Gifts (Law No. 08/L-108), was adopted on 10 August 2022.⁷⁹ **Very good progress**

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Agency for Administration of Sequestered and Confiscated Assets, Annual Report 2022, February 2023 at <https://aapsk.rks-gov.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Raporti-vjetor-i-performances-Janar-dhjetor-2022.pdf>.

⁷³ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 12 October 2022.

⁷⁴ Agency for Administration of Sequestered and Confiscated Assets, Annual Report 2022, February 2023 at <https://aapsk.rks-gov.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Raporti-vjetor-i-performances-Janar-dhjetor-2022.pdf>.

⁷⁵ Balkans Group interview with an official from the Ministry of Justice, Prishtina, September 2023.

⁷⁶ Assembly of Kosovo, The Criminal Procedure Code (No. 08/L-032) at <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=61759>.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Assembly of Kosovo, Law Nr.08/L-017 on Kosovo Agency for Prevention of Corruption, at <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDocumentDetail.aspx?ActID=60591>.

⁷⁹ Assembly of Kosovo, Law on Declaration, Origin and Control of Assets and Gifts at <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDocumentDetail.aspx?ActID=61304>

Revision of the Law on Political Party Financing

The Law on Financing Political Parties was amended, in line with the opinion of the Venice Commission and EU Commission's recommendations.⁸⁰ **Very good progress**

Very good progress was made in the legal framework in 2022.

| Fight Against Corruption | No Progress | Limited Progress | Some Progress | Good Progress | Very Good Progress |
|--|-------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Public Perception of corruption | | ✓ | | | |
| Prevention | | | | | ✓ |
| Measures Against high-level corruption | | | | ✓ | |
| Confiscation of Assets | | ✓ | | | |
| Legal Framework | | | | | ✓ |
| The overall Progress | | | ✓ | | |

Table 15. The overall progress in the fight against corruption

Some progress was made in the fight against corruption in 2022.

3. Fight against organised crime

Combating corruption and organised crime are crucial areas for measuring Kosovo's progress as they can both hinder the rule of law. In the 2022 country report, Kosovo was considered to be at an early stage in the fight against organised crime.⁸¹

The fight against organised crime is placed under Pillar I: Good Governance and Rule of Law within ERA II. Among others, the focus is on facilitating the process of tackling high-level organised crime cases, reducing the effect of the global pandemic on court hearings that treat criminal trials, and adopting and fully implementing legislation on high-level organised crime cases in line with the Venice Commission's opinions.⁸² In addition, the fight against organised crime is placed under Block I: Political Criteria in the NPISAA.⁸³

- a) To assess whether Kosovo has made progress in meeting the fight against organised crime criteria, these sub-indicators were used: *level of organised crime*- information on the overall level of organised crime;
- b) *measures against organised crime*- information regarding the investigation, prosecution, adjudication, and guilty verdicts related to organised crime;
- c) *drugs/narcotics*- data on investigation, prosecution, adjudication, and guilty verdicts related to drugs/narcotics cases;
- d) *money laundering*- data on investigation, prosecution, adjudication, and guilty verdicts related to money laundering;
- e) *fight against terrorism and violent extremism*- information on the investigation, prosecution, adjudication, and guilty verdicts related to the fight against terrorism and violent extremism cases as well as the establishment of the Joint Threat Assessment Center;
- f) *trafficking in persons*- data on the investigation, prosecution, adjudication, and guilty verdicts related to trafficking; and

⁸⁰ Kosova Democratic Institute, Political Financing in Kosovo: What after the recent legal changes, December 2022, at <https://kdi-kosova.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/47-Raport-Political-Financing-Kosovo-Eng-02.pdf>

⁸¹ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 12 October 2022.

⁸² Kosovo-European Reform Agenda (ERA) II, 2020.

⁸³ Government of Kosovo, National Programme for Implementation of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (NPISAA), 2016, at [National_Programme_for_Implementation_of_the_Stabilisation_and_Association_Agreement.pdf](#) (rks-gov.net).

g) *legal framework*- that is whether laws and strategies are being developed and implemented.

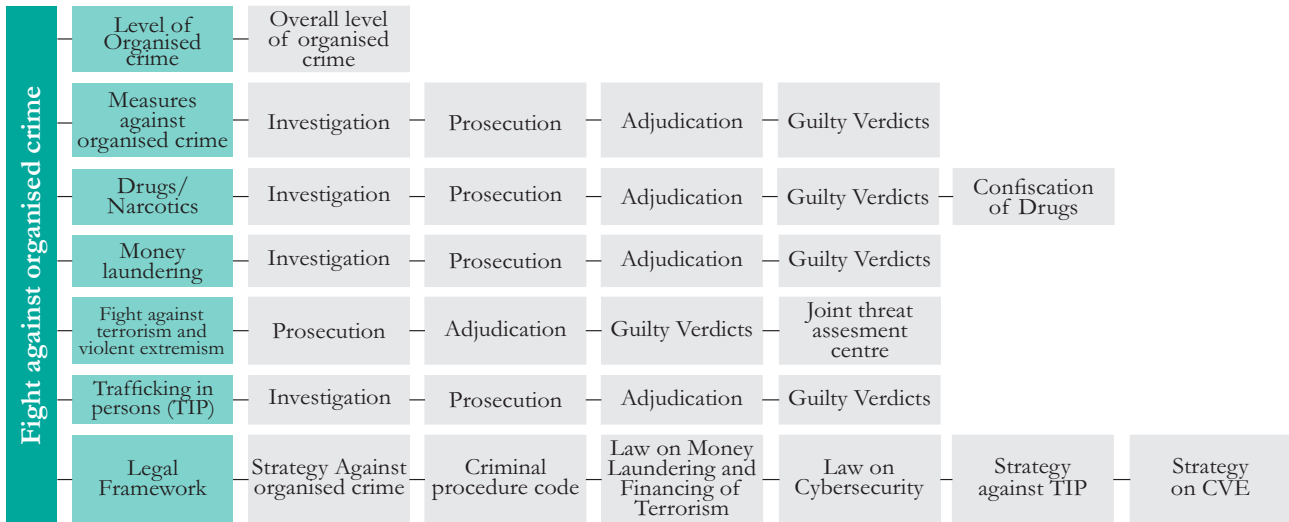


Figure 11. Fight against organised crime and its sub-indicators

a) Level of organised crime

The means of assessing the level of organised crime include:

- *the overall level of organised crime.*

Overall level of organised crime

Kosovo ranks quite high on the level of organised crime compared to other countries. In 2021, Kosovo had a 5.19 criminality score on the Global Organised Crime Index along with countries such as Guinea, Benin and Angola.⁸⁴ There is no data for 2022 on the Global Organised Crime Index to compare the progress. **No data**

b) Measures against organised crime

The means of assessing the measures against organised crime include:

- *investigation;*
- *prosecution;*
- *adjudication; and*
- *guilty verdicts.*

Investigation

In 2022, 14 cases of organised crime were registered, which is 26.3% less than in 2021.⁸⁵ **No progress**

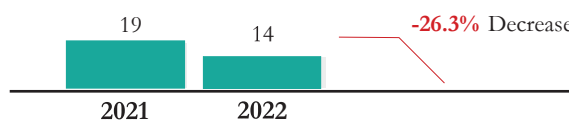


Figure 12. The number of organised crime cases registered

⁸⁴ Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime, Global Organized Crime Index 2021, at <https://ocindex.net/assets/downloads/global-ocindex-report.pdf>.

⁸⁵ Balkans Group interview with an official from the Office of the Chief State Prosecutor, Prishtina, October 2023.

Prosecution

In 2022, the Prosecution filed 52 indictments out of 61 organised crime cases in total (including 14 new cases).⁸⁶ This represents an increase of 59% in the number of filed indictments compared to 2021. **Good progress**

| Year | 2022 |
|-----------------------------|-------|
| Number of cases | 61 |
| Number of indictments filed | 52 |
| Percentage (%) | 85.2% |

Table 26. The percentage of filed indictments

Adjudication

In 2022, the court ruled final verdicts on 21 out of 61 organised crime cases, whereas in 2021, only 4 out of 54 cases had final court verdicts.⁸⁷ **Some progress**

| Year | 2022 |
|---------------------------|--------|
| Number of all cases | 61 |
| Number of guilty verdicts | 21 |
| Percentage (%) | 34.43% |

Table 27. The percentage of guilty verdicts

Guilty verdicts

In 2022, the court ruled 21 guilty verdicts out of 61 cases of organised crime, or 34.4%. In 2021, the percentage of guilty verdicts was only 5.56% of all cases.⁸⁸ **Some progress**

| Year | 2022 |
|---------------------------|--------|
| Number of all cases | 61 |
| Number of guilty verdicts | 21 |
| Percentage (%) | 34.43% |

Table 27. The percentage of guilty verdicts

Some progress was made in measures against organised crime in 2022.

c) Drugs/Narcotics

The means of assessing drugs/narcotics-related cases include:

- *investigation;*
- *prosecution;*
- *adjudication;*
- *guilty verdicts; and*
- *confiscation of drugs.*

Investigation

In 2021, 1105 new drug-related cases were registered. In 2022, this number reached 1172.⁸⁹ This marks a marginal increase of 6.06% in the number of new drug-related registered cases. **Limited progress**

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Balkans Group interview with an official from the Office of the Chief State Prosecutor, Prishtina, October 2023.

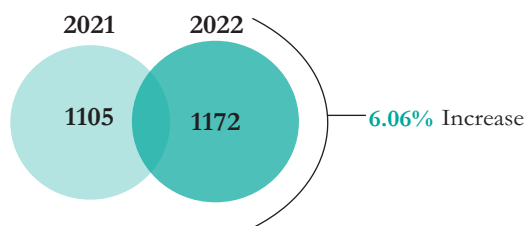


Figure 13. The ratio of registered cases

Prosecution

In 2022, the Prosecution filed 1100 indictments out of 2217 drug-related cases.⁹⁰ **Some progress**

| Year | 2022 |
|-----------------------------|------|
| Number of cases | 2217 |
| Number of indictments filed | 1100 |
| Percentage (%) | 50% |

Table 30. The percentage of filed indictments

Adjudication

In 2022, the court issued 683 rulings out of 2217 drug-related cases, which is a 58.5% higher percentage than in 2021.⁹¹ **Some progress**

| Year | 2022 |
|----------------------|--------|
| Number of all cases | 2217 |
| Final court verdicts | 683 |
| Percentage (%) | 30.83% |

Table 31. The percentage of court rulings

Guilty verdicts

In 2022, the courts issued 650 guilty verdicts out of 2217 drug-related cases, which is 29.31% of all drug-related cases.⁹² This is 60.3% higher than in 2021.⁹³ **Some progress**

| Year | 2022 |
|------------------------|--------|
| Number of all cases | 2217 |
| Number guilty verdicts | 650 |
| Percentage (%) | 29,31% |

Table 32. The percentage of guilty verdicts

Confiscation of drugs

In 2021, 3642.31g of heroin, 414958.18g of cocaine, 0g of ecstasy, 499549g of marihuana, and 2,380 cannabis plants were confiscated.⁹⁴ In 2022, 246665.56g of heroin, 4165.18g of cocaine, 0gr of ecstasy, 662669.69g of marihuana, and 24511 cannabis plants were confiscated.⁹⁵ There is no available data on the value of confiscated drugs.

Some progress was made in the fight against drugs/narcotics in 2022.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Kosovo Police Annual Work Report January-December 2021.

⁹⁵ Kosovo Police Annual Work Report January-December 2022 and Kosovo Police Annual Work Report January-December 2021.

d) Money laundering

The means of assessing money laundering cases involve:

- *investigation;*
- *prosecution;*
- *adjudication; and*
- *guilty verdicts.*

Investigation

In 2022, 14 new money laundering cases were registered, marking a 56% increase from 2021.⁹⁶ **Good progress**

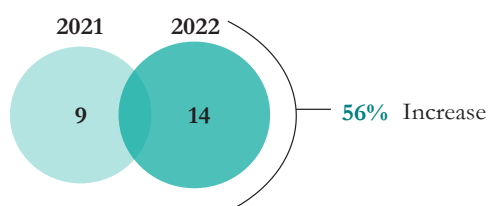


Figure 14. The ratio of registered cases

Prosecution

In 2022, the Prosecution filed 5 indictments out of 48 money-laundering cases in total.⁹⁷ **Limited progress**

| Year | 2022 |
|-----------------------------|------|
| Number of cases | 48 |
| Number of indictments filed | 5 |
| Percentage (%) | 10% |

Table 34. The percentage of filed indictments

Adjudication

In 2022, the court issued 9 rulings out of 48 money-laundering cases.⁹⁸ In 2021, the court ruled in only 1 out of 43 money laundering cases.⁹⁹ **Limited progress**

| Year | 2022 |
|--------------------------|------|
| Number of all cases | 48 |
| Number of court verdicts | 9 |
| Percentage (%) | 19% |

Table 35. The percentage of court rulings

Guilty verdicts

In 2022, the court ruled 7 guilty verdicts out of 48 cases of money-laundering, or 14.6% of all cases.¹⁰⁰ In 2021, the percentage of guilty verdicts was only 2.3% of all cases.¹⁰¹ **Limited progress**

⁹⁶ Balkans Group interview with an official from the Office of the Chief State Prosecutor, Prishtina, October 2023.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Balkans Group interview with an official from the Office of the Chief State Prosecutor, Prishtina, October 2023.

| Year | 2022 |
|---------------------------|-------|
| Number of all cases | 48 |
| Number of guilty verdicts | 7 |
| Percentage (%) | 14.6% |

Table 24. The percentage of guilty verdicts

Some progress was made in the fight against money laundering in 2022.

e) Fight against terrorism and violent extremism

The means of assessing the fight against terrorism and violent extremism involve:

- *investigation;*
- *prosecution;*
- *adjudication;*
- *guilty verdicts; and*
- *Joint Threat Assessment Centre.*

Investigation

In 2022, 12 new terrorism-related cases were registered, marking a 71.4% increase from 2021.¹⁰²

Good progress

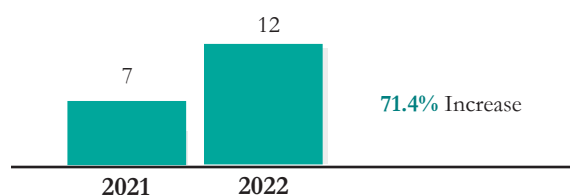


Figure 16. The number of terrorism cases registered

Prosecution

In 2022, the Prosecution filed 7 indictments out of 67 terrorism-related cases in total.¹⁰³ **Limited progress**

| Year | 2022 |
|-----------------------------|-------|
| Number of cases | 67 |
| Number of indictments filed | 7 |
| Filed indictments (%) | 10.4% |

Table 25. The number of filed indictments

Adjudication

In 2022, the courts issued 10 rulings out of 67 terrorism-related cases, or 6.25%. This is a significant increase from 2021 where the court ruled only in 6.25% of all terrorism-related cases.¹⁰⁴ **Limited progress**

| Year | 2022 |
|--------------------------|------|
| Number of cases | 67 |
| Number of court verdicts | 10 |
| Percentage (%) | 15% |

Table 26. The percentage of court rulings

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

Guilty verdicts

In 2022, the court ruled 9 guilty verdicts out of 67 terrorism-related cases, or 13.4% of all cases.¹⁰⁵ In 2021, the percentage of guilty verdicts was only 6.25% of all cases.¹⁰⁶ **Limited Progress**

| Year | 2022 |
|---------------------------|-------|
| Number of cases | 67 |
| Number of guilty verdicts | 9 |
| Percentage (%) | 13.4% |

Table 27. The percentage of guilty verdicts

Joint Threat Assessment Centre

Kosovo is required to establish a Joint Threat Assessment Centre, including a threat level grading system, which would facilitate a greater understanding among all agencies of the current operational climate, keep the public informed and improve responses, including the protection of critical infrastructure.¹⁰⁷ The centre has not been established. **No progress**

Limited progress was made in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism.

f) Trafficking in Persons (TIP)

The means of assessing the trafficking in persons cases involve:

- *investigation;*
- *prosecution;*
- *adjudication; and*
- *guilty verdicts.*

Investigation

In 2022, 48 new TIP cases were registered, marking a 4.34% increase from 2021.¹⁰⁸ **Limited progress**

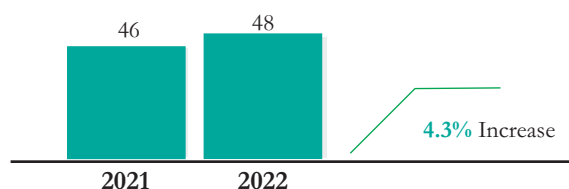


Figure 17. The number of registered cases

Prosecution

In 2022, the Prosecution filed 49 indictments out of 96 TIP cases in total.¹⁰⁹ **Good progress**

| Year | 2022 |
|-----------------------------|------|
| Number of cases | 96 |
| Number of indictments filed | 49 |
| Percentage (%) | 51% |

Table 28. The number of filed indictments

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Balkans Group interview with an official from the Office of the Chief State Prosecutor, Prishtina, October 2023.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

Adjudication

In 2022, the court issued 20 rulings out of 96 TIP cases in total, or 21%. This marks an increase compared to 2021 where the court ruled only in 8.13% of all TIP cases.¹¹⁰ **Limited progress**

| Year | 2022 |
|--------------------------|------|
| Number of all cases | 96 |
| Number of court verdicts | 20 |
| Percentage (%) | 21% |

Table 29. The percentage of court rulings

Guilty verdicts

In 2022, the court ruled 19 guilty verdicts out of 96 TIP cases, or 19.8%.¹¹¹ In 2021, the percentage of guilty verdicts was only 4.65% of all cases. **Limited progress**

| Year | 2022 |
|--|-------|
| Number of persons with the court verdict | 96 |
| Number of guilty verdicts | 19 |
| Percentage (%) | 19.8% |

Table 30. The percentage of guilty verdicts

Some progress was made in the fight against trafficking in persons in 2022.

g) Legal framework

The means of assessing the legal framework regarding the fight against organised crime include:

- *Strategy and Action Plan against organised crime;*
- *Criminal Procedure Code;*
- *Law on Prevention of Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism;*
- *Law on Cybersecurity;*
- *Strategy and Action Plan against Trafficking in Persons (TIP); and*
- *Strategy and Action Plan on Countering Violent Extremism (CVE).*

Strategy and Action Plan against organised crime

The implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan against Organized Crime 2018-2022 unfolded as follows: 76.9% fully implemented, 15.4% partially implemented, and 7.7% not implemented. However, the Ministry of Internal Affairs is still in the process of establishing a working group to draft the new Strategy and Action Plan.¹¹² **No progress**

Criminal Procedure Code (CPC)

The CPC No. 08/L-032 was revised during 2021 and it was adopted on 17 August 2022.¹¹³ **Very good progress**

Law on Prevention of Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism

In 2022, no progress was made in amending the law.¹¹⁴ **No progress**

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Balkans Group interview with an official from the Ministry of Internal Affairs, September 2023.

¹¹³ Assembly of Kosovo, Criminal Procedure Code, at <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=61759>.

¹¹⁴ Balkans Group interview with an official from the Committee on Budget, Labour and Transfers, Assembly of Kosovo, Prishtina, October 2023.

Law on Cybersecurity

On 14 September, the Government approved the draft Law on Cybersecurity. This draft law foresees the establishment of the Agency for Cyber Security. The law has not been adopted yet.¹¹⁵ **No progress**

Strategy and Action Plan against Trafficking in Persons (TIP)

In June 2022, the Government approved the Strategy and Action Plan against Trafficking in Persons, and it commenced implementation immediately after approval.¹¹⁶ **Very good progress**

Strategy and Action Plan on Countering Violent Extremism (CVE)

The new strategy that fights against terrorism and violent extremism, was not adopted during the reporting period.¹¹⁷

The National Coordinator for CT/CVE should take on a greater role in supervising the rehabilitation and reintegration process, including collaborating with municipalities. It is essential for civil society organisations to become more engaged in local community efforts focused on rehabilitation and reintegration. While the counterterrorism focal point and the Intelligence Unit within the Kosovo Correctional Service have improved coordination before and after release, there is a significant need for enhancing de-radicalization and disengagement programs within the correctional system.

Authorities should provide specialised training, particularly for the Kosovo Probation Service, to create programs for individuals convicted of terrorism-related offences.¹¹⁸ **No progress**

Some progress was made in the legal framework in 2022.

| Fight against organised crime | No Progress | Limited Progress | Some Progress | Good Progress | Very Good Progress |
|---|-------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Level of organised crime | | | | | |
| Measures against organised crime | | | ✓ | | |
| Drugs/Narcotics | | | ✓ | | |
| Money Laundering | | | ✓ | | |
| Fight against terrorism and violent extremism | | ✓ | | | |
| Trafficking in persons | | | ✓ | | |
| Legal Framework | | | ✓ | | |
| The Overall Progress | | | ✓ | | |

Table 31. The overall progress in the fight against organised crime

The overall progress in the Fight against organised crime was assessed as ‘some’.

The progress in the Rule of Law is assessed as ‘some’ in 2022.

115 Illyria, The Cyber Security Agency will be established in Kosovo, September 2022, at <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1BP3i4waIXUL1x8Fzef-NOPDuddA5i7n8iOPdTGW4VxM/edit>.

116 Balkans Group interview with an official from the Ministry of Internal Affairs, September 2023.

117 Ibid

118 European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 19 October 2022.



Dimension II

**HUMAN
RIGHTS AND
FUNDAMENTAL
FREEDOMS**

Summary and Analysis

Human rights and fundamental freedoms are key EU values enriched in Article 2 of the Treaty of the European Union.¹¹⁹ These criteria focus on the enforcement of human rights and fundamental freedoms through implementing legislation, enforcing property rights, improving gender equality and protecting children's rights.¹²⁰

Human rights and fundamental freedoms are placed under Pillar I: Good Governance and Rule of Law within the ERA II. They also fall under Block I: Political Criteria in the NPISAA, making it a key component of Kosovo's progress.¹²¹

To assess whether Kosovo has achieved progress in meeting the human rights and fundamental freedoms criteria, only one indicator is used:

4. Fundamental Rights

This indicator uses the following sub-indicators to measure progress in this area:

- Civil and political rights*- more specifically freedom of expression, freedom of religion, freedom of association, gender equality, and rights of marginalised groups;
- Economic, social, and cultural rights*- the right to work, the right to property rights, and the right to education; and
- Legal framework*- whether laws and strategies are being developed and implemented.

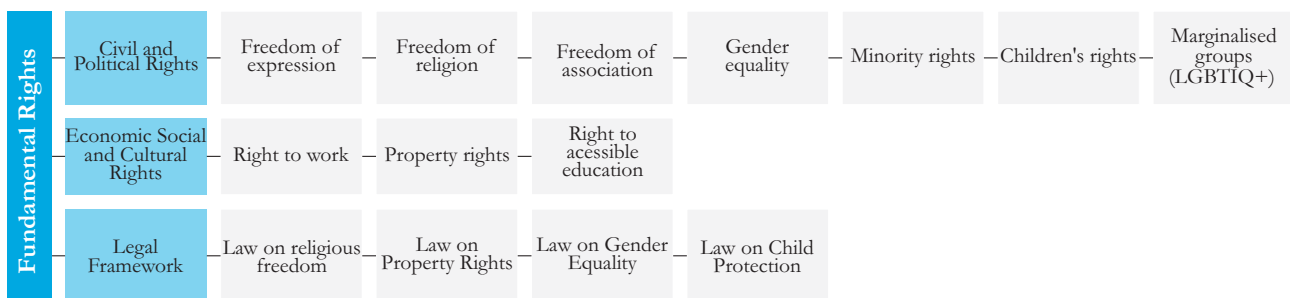


Figure 18. Fundamental rights and its indicators

a) Civil and Political Rights

The means of assessing civil and political rights include:

- *overall level of civil and political rights;*
- *freedom of expression;*
- *freedom of religion;*
- *freedom of association;*
- *gender equality;*
- *minority rights;*
- *children's rights; and*
- *marginalised groups.*

119 European Parliament, Protecting fundamental rights within the Union, at <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/about-parliament/en/democracy-and-human-rights/fundamental-rights-in-the-eu>.

120 Kosovo-European Reform Agenda (ERA) II, 2020.

121 Government of Kosovo, National Programme for Implementation of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (NPISAA), 2016, at [National_Programme_for_Implementation_of_the_Stabilisation_and_Association_Agreement.pdf](#) (rks-gov.net).

Overall level of civil and political rights

Kosovo is classified as ‘partly free’ according to the Freedom House Index. In 2021, the total score was 56/100; 31/60 on civil liberties, and 23/40 on political rights.¹²² In 2022, the overall score was 60/100; 32/60 on civil liberties, and 28/40 on political rights.¹²³

While the score on civil and political liberties remained approximately the same, both political rights and the overall score slightly increased. **Limited progress**

| Year | 2021 | 2022 | Increase (%) |
|------------------|--------|--------|--------------|
| Political Rights | 23/40 | 28/40 | 22% |
| Civil liberties | 31/60 | 32/60 | 3.3 % |
| Overall score | 56/100 | 60/100 | 7.1% |

Table 32. Civil liberties and political rights in Kosovo

Freedom of expression

Freedom House Index for freedom of expression in 2021 and 2022 score was 3/4 (75%), indicating that ‘Individuals are largely free to express their political views without fear of retribution.

In recent years, discussions on politically sensitive topics such as ethnic relations and LGBTIQ+ matters have increased, marking an improvement compared to previous years.¹²⁴ Kosovo stands better in the area of freedom of expression than in the freedom of media where journalists report harassment and intimidation, particularly on social media. However, no progress was reported in 2022. **No progress**

| Year | 2021 | 2022 |
|-----------------------|------|------|
| Freedom of expression | 3/4 | 3/4 |
| Increase (%) | 0% | |

Table 49. Freedom of expression

Freedom of religion

Kosovo’s score on the Freedom House Index for the freedom of religion in both 2021 and 2022, was 2/4 (50%). The index refers to ‘whether individuals are free to practise and express their religious faith or non-belief in public and private’.¹²⁵ The constitution guarantees religious freedom. However, the Law on Freedom of Religion prevents some religious communities from registering as legal entities, a designation that would allow them to more easily buy and rent property, access burial sites, establish bank accounts, and carry out other administrative activities.¹²⁶ **No progress**

| Year | 2021 | 2022 |
|---------------------|------|------|
| Freedom of religion | 2/4 | 2/4 |
| Increase (%) | 0% | |

Table 50. Freedom of religion

Freedom of association

Kosovo’s score on freedom of assembly in the Freedom House Index for 2021 and 2022 was 3/4, meaning that ‘generally freedom of assembly is respected’.¹²⁷

Under the Law on Freedom of Association, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) function freely, though the courts can ban groups that violate the constitutional order or encourage ethnic hatred. NGOs occasionally experience pressure to curtail criticism of the government, though many continue to criticise the authorities and have largely been able to engage in advocacy work without interference.¹²⁸

¹²² Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2021, at <https://freedomhouse.org/country/kosovo/freedom-world/2021>.

¹²³ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2022, at <https://freedomhouse.org/country/kosovo/freedom-world/2022>.

¹²⁴ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2021, at <https://freedomhouse.org/country/kosovo/freedom-world/2021> and Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2022, at <https://freedomhouse.org/country/kosovo/freedom-world/2022>.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2022, at <https://freedomhouse.org/country/kosovo/freedom-world/2022> and Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2021, at <https://freedomhouse.org/country/kosovo/freedom-world/2021>.

As for the freedom of trade unions, employers do not always respect collective bargaining rights. Likewise, difficulties in forming trade unions in the private sector are noted due to the intimidation of workers by employers. As a result, very few private-sector unions exist in Kosovo.¹²⁹ During a significant part of 2022, public-sector unions and the government were in strained relations due to worker demands for higher salaries. In August, the teachers' union initiated a general strike, delaying the start of the academic year by a month. Accusations of union-government collusion arose, with the opposition rebuking the government for the lack of an agreement.¹³⁰ **No progress**

| Year | 2021 | 2022 |
|--------------------------|------|------|
| Freedom of assembly | 3/4 | 3/4 |
| Increase (%) | | 0% |
| Freedom for NGOs | 3/4 | 3/4 |
| Increase (%) | | 0% |
| Freedom for trade unions | 2/4 | 2/4 |
| Increase (%) | | 0% |

Table 51. Freedom of association

Gender equality

Positive improvements in terms of women's representation were made in 2022. The current legislature has 40 women MPs; the highest since 2008, with only one-third of them elected to meet the legal quota. Women chair 8 of the 14 functional committees in the Assembly. 6 out of all 18 government members are women, including 2 deputy Prime Ministers.¹³¹ However, women experience discrimination in employment, particularly in regard to hiring for high-level positions in government and the private sector. They are still under-represented in decision-making positions in private and public institutions.

The participation of women in politics has continued to increase but remains low. With no changes in the government's composition, the number of women representatives in the Assembly and the Government remained the same as last year.¹³² **No progress**

Minority rights

Ethnic minorities, such as Serb, Romani, Ashkali, Balkan-Egyptian, Turkish, Bosniak, Gorani, Croat, and Montenegrin communities, continue to face discrimination in employment, education, social services, language use, freedom of movement, the right to return to their homes (for displaced individuals), and other fundamental rights outlined by laws.¹³³ **No progress**

Children's rights

The Law on Children's Rights, which entered into force in 2020, marked a milestone achievement in the effort to protect children's rights. It established a comprehensive, legal framework for guaranteeing and protecting children from all forms of abuse, exploitation, neglect, physical and mental violence, or other threats that could endanger children's life, safety, health, education, or development.¹³⁴

In 2022, nearly 23% of children in Kosovo lived in poverty, with 7% in extreme poverty. These families faced additional strain in 2022 due to a sharp inflation rise surpassing 14%, notably impacting essentials like bread, meat, dairy, and baby food. Although the primary health care budget recently grew, child health metrics still rank among the region's lowest. Child mortality is four times higher than the EU average, rising to eight times in Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities.¹³⁵ **No progress**

Marginalised groups (LGBTIQ+)

In recent years, discussion of politically sensitive topics such as ethnic relations and LGBTQ+ matters have become more common, marking a positive improvement compared to 2021.¹³⁶

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2022, at <https://freedomhouse.org/country/kosovo/freedom-world/2022>.

¹³² European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 12 October 2022.

¹³³ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2022: Kosovo, at <https://freedomhouse.org/country/kosovo/freedom-world/2023>

¹³⁴ UNICEF Kosovo, State of Children's Rights Report, 2021, at <https://www.unicef.org/kosovoprogramme/media/2646/file/English-2021.pdf>.

¹³⁵ UNICEF Kosovo, State of Children's Rights Report, 2022 at <https://www.unicef.org/kosovoprogramme/media/3986/file/English-2023.pdf>.

¹³⁶ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2022, at <https://freedomhouse.org/country/kosovo/freedom-world/2023> and Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2021, at <https://freedomhouse.org/country/kosovo/freedom-world/2021>.

However, LGBTQ+ people face social pressure to hide their sexual orientation or gender identity and transgender individuals face obstacles in making legal changes to their identification cards. The Civil Code of Kosovo excludes same-sex partnerships from explicit legal recognition.¹³⁷ Moreover, the discrimination in employment, housing, access to health care and education is evident and remains a serious concern.¹³⁸

Limited progress

No progress was made in civil and political rights in 2022.

b) Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

The means of assessing economic, social and cultural rights include:

- *right to work;*
- *property rights; and*
- *access to education.*

Right to work

The assessment of progress in labour rights has largely relied on the effectiveness of the legislative framework's implementation throughout the years. Kosovo institutions have made efforts to improve the legal framework against workplace discrimination, but additional reforms are suggested to address labour market disparities.¹³⁹

Legal provisions that promote equal access for women, persons with disabilities, and minorities are poorly enforced, leading to informal employment, high turnover rates, an unstable labour market, challenging working conditions, and inadequate workplace safety and health measures.

In addition, on 14 June 2022, the draft Law on Minimum Wage was approved in the first reading in the Assembly, with the proposal of increasing the minimum wage from EUR 170 to EUR 264. However, no further progress was made in its adoption during 2022.¹⁴⁰ **Limited progress**

Property rights

Kosovo's score on the Freedom House Index for 2022 on property rights was 1/4, marking no change from 2021. The index refers to an individual's ability to exercise the right to own property and establish a private business without undue interference from state or non-state actors.¹⁴¹ The legislative framework is mainly in place, but the implementation and enforcement of such rights are inadequate. There are issues related to inheritance rights, such as patriarchal attitudes that pressure women to renounce their rights to male members of the family.

The government has initiated a number of policies to provide incentives for women and men for common ownership by liberalising municipal taxes and fees. But this has not increased the number of female property owners.¹⁴² **No progress**

| Year | 2021 | 2022 |
|-----------------|------|------|
| Property rights | 1/4 | 1/4 |
| Increase (%) | 0% | |

Table 52. Property rights

¹³⁷ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2022, at <https://freedomhouse.org/country/kosovo/freedom-world/2023>

¹³⁸ US State Department, Kosovo 2022 Human Rights Report, at https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/415610_KOSOVO-2022-HUMAN-RIGHTS-REPORT.pdf.

¹³⁹ Regional Cooperation Council, Performance of Western Balkan Economies Regarding the European Pillar of Social Rights 2021 review on Kosovo*, 2022, at <https://www.rcc.int/pubs/128/regional-overview-of-western-balkan-economies-regarding-the-european-pillar-of-social-rights-2021>.

¹⁴⁰ Gazeta Express, When will the Minimum Wage Law come into effect? July 2023, at <https://www.gazetaexpress.com/kur-do-te-hyje-ne-fuqi-ligji-per-pagen-minimale/>.

¹⁴¹ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2022, at <https://freedomhouse.org/country/kosovo/freedom-world/2023> and Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2021, at <https://freedomhouse.org/country/kosovo/freedom-world/2021>.

¹⁴² Ibid.

Access to education

The lack of proper early education for the majority of children was evident in 2022, as only 15% of 3-4-year-olds attend such programs. Concerns persist regarding education quality at primary and secondary levels. Only 41% of children exhibit basic reading skills, while 42% display foundational numeracy skills. The rates are even lower in the Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities.¹⁴³

Children with disabilities suffer from a lack of early identification and support by the health and education systems, as well as widespread exclusion from school. To address this challenge, 100 assistants dedicated to children with special needs in regular schools, along with three sign language interpreters were hired. This initiative represents a continuation of the commitment from the previous year.¹⁴⁴

The law mandates equal conditions for all students and acknowledges minority students' right to public education in their native language through secondary school, but this was not implemented. Minority leaders from various communities cited a lack of textbooks and materials in their native languages, sometimes resorting to Albanian or curricula supported by Serbia or Turkey for educating students.¹⁴⁵

Limited progress

Limited progress was made in economic, social and cultural rights in 2022.

1. Legal framework

The means of assessing the legal framework regarding human rights and fundamental freedoms include:

- *Law on Religious Freedom;*
- *Law on Property Rights;*
- *Law on Gender Equality; and*
- *Law on Child Protection.*

Law on Religious Freedom

Legal provisions promoting tolerance among religions and stipulating the separation of religious communities from public authorities are in place. However, the Kosovo's Assembly still needs to pass the long-pending Draft Law on Religious Freedom, which should incorporate the recommendations of the Venice Commission from 2014 to ensure the complete respect of this freedom.¹⁴⁶

In 2022, the Law on Religious Freedoms which would regulate the status of religious groups was not adopted.¹⁴⁷ **No progress**

Law on Property Rights

In February 2022, the Law (No.08/L-013) on Property Rights of Foreign Citizens was adopted and published in the official gazette.¹⁴⁸ **Very good progress**

Law on Gender Equality

The implementation of the Law on Gender Equality is lacking. Though parties are legally required to achieve gender parity in their candidate lists, they often fail to do so.¹⁴⁹ The law should be further implemented to increase the representation of women in politics by appointing more women to decision-making positions in private and public institutions. Likewise, there is a need for enhanced coordination with gender equality officers in the ministries and municipalities.¹⁵⁰ **No progress**

¹⁴³ UNICEF, Kosovo Programme Annual Report 2022, at <https://www.unicef.org/kosovoprogramme/media/3986/file/English-2023.pdf>

¹⁴⁴ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 8 November 2023.

¹⁴⁵ Office of the High Commissioner, Civil Society Report on Human Rights in Kosovo in 2022, at https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/415610_KOSOVO-2022-HUMAN-RIGHTS-REPORT.pdf

¹⁴⁶ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 12 October 2022.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Law (No.08/L-013) on Property Rights of Foreign Citizens, at <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=53715&langid=2>.

¹⁴⁹ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2023 at <https://freedomhouse.org/country/kosovo/freedom-world/2023>.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

Law on Child Protection

The Law on Child Protections largely aligns with international standards but lacks implementation.¹⁵¹

In 2022, UNICEF actively supported the development of five new Administrative Instructions for the Law on Child Protection and facilitated the formation of Child Rights Teams in 11 municipalities. Additionally, it provided training to 402 child protection and other front-line workers in 28 municipalities on the implementation of the Law.¹⁵² **Some progress**

Some progress was made in the legal framework in 2022.

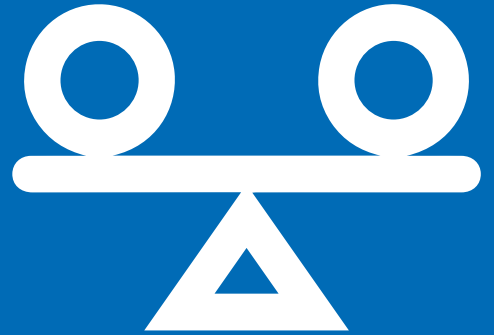
| Fundamental Rights | No Progress | Limited Progress | Some Progress | Good Progress | Very Good Progress |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Civil and political rights | ✓ | | | | |
| Economic, social and cultural rights | | ✓ | | | |
| Legal framework | | | ✓ | | |
| Overall progress | | ✓ | | | |

Table 37. The overall progress for Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms

The overall progress in Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms is assessed as ‘limited’ in 2022.

¹⁵¹ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 12 October 2022.

¹⁵² UNICEF, Kosovo Programme Annual Report 2022 at <https://www.unicef.org/kosovoprogramme/media/3986/file/English-2023.pdf>.



Dimension III

DEMOCRATISATION

Summary and Analysis

Democratisation entails broad participation in political decision-making and local ownership of sectors that are key to sustainable development. The focus is on facilitating the involvement of women and youth in civic and political life.¹⁵³

These standards consist of the Media and Civil Society, Political Stability, Elections and Public Administration Reform, falling within Pillar I: Good Governance and Rule of Law of the ERA II.¹⁵⁴ Additionally, it is included under Block I: Political Criteria in the NPISAA.¹⁵⁵

In relation to media, the focus is on the independent financial and editorial functioning of the public broadcaster, compliance with freedom of expression and media standards. Political stability focuses on ensuring the stability of institutions supporting democracy. In elections, the key priorities are enhancing the electoral process, implementing EU recommendations from observation missions, and adopting legislation on political entity financing based on the Venice Commission opinion.¹⁵⁶

To assess whether Kosovo has achieved progress on democratisation, four core indicators are used:

1. Media and civil society;
2. Political stability;
3. Elections; and
4. Public Administration Reform.

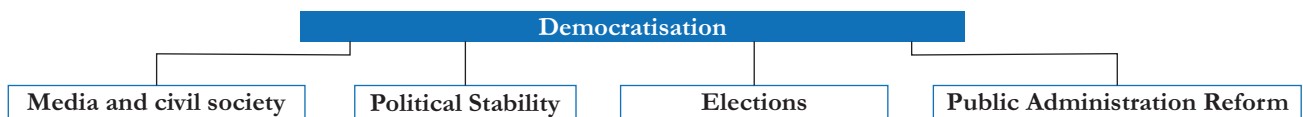


Figure 19. Democratisation and its indicators

1. Media and Civil Society

To assess whether Kosovo has achieved progress in meeting the media and civil society criteria, the following sub-indicators were used:

- a) *freedom of media* - or information on whether media is free and independent, harassment of journalists' cases, protection of whistle-blowers, and functioning of RTK;
- b) *civil society* - or information on CSO consultations, CSO's public financing, and promotion of consultation platforms; and
- c) *legal framework* - whether laws and strategies are being developed and implemented.

¹⁵³ European Commission, Democracy, at https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/policies/peace-and-governance/democracy_en

¹⁵⁴ Kosovo-European Reform Agenda (ERA) II, 2020.

¹⁵⁵ Government of Kosovo, National Programme for Implementation of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (NPISAA), 2016, at National_Programme_for_Implementation_of_the_Stabilisation_and_Association_Agreement.pdf (rks-gov.net)

¹⁵⁶ Kosovo-European Reform Agenda (ERA) II, 2020.

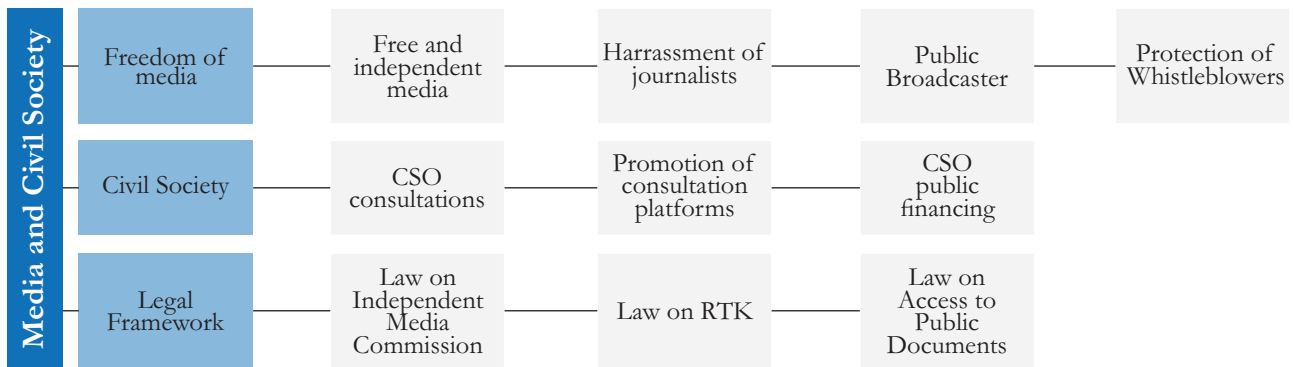


Figure 20. Media and Civil Society and its sub-indicators

a) Freedom of media

The means of assessing the freedom of media include:

- *free and independent media;*
- *harassment of journalists;*
- *public broadcaster; and*
- *protection of whistle-blowers.*

Free and independent media

In 2022, Kosovo's score on free and independent media remained 2/4, same as in 2021.¹⁵⁷ The political influence, harassment and intimidation of journalists was evident in 2022 as well. **No progress**

| Year | 2021 | 2022 |
|------------------|------|------|
| Freedom of media | 2/4 | 2/4 |
| Increase (%) | | 0% |

Table 38. Freedom of media

Kosovo has some level of preparation and benefits from a pluralistic and lively media environment. Yet, there were reported concerns about public smear campaigns, threats and physical attacks on journalists, as well as a lack of financial self-sustainability. Such influence is also pointed out in relation to the public broadcaster RTK.¹⁵⁸

Harassment of journalists

In 2022, 33 cases of threats and attacks against journalists and media were registered, presenting an increase of 14% compared to 2021.¹⁵⁹ **No progress**

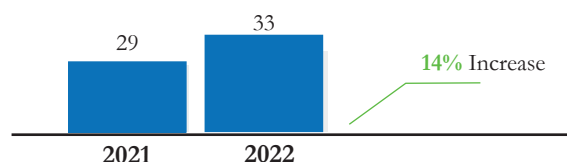


Table 53. Harassment of journalists

¹⁵⁷ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2021, at <https://freedomhouse.org/country/kosovo/freedom-world/2021> and Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2022, at <https://freedomhouse.org/country/kosovo/freedom-world/2023>.

¹⁵⁸ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 12 October 2022.

¹⁵⁹ Kosovo Indicators on the level of media freedom and journalists' safety 2022, at https://agk-ks.org/site/assets/files/3051/indicators_on_the_level_of_media_freedom_and_journalists_safety_2022.pdf.

Public Broadcaster

The election process of the RTK board was assessed as merit-based by the monitoring local and international organisations.¹⁶⁰ The newly elected board of RTK appointed the General Director of Kosovo's Public Service Broadcaster. Additionally, new board members for the Independent Media Commission were elected, enabling the institution to function after it had lacked a voting quorum for several months.¹⁶¹ An evaluation of RTK indicated progress as a result of the open, transparent, and merit-based election process for the RTK board. This resulted in a favourable reception of the recent management changes at RTK.¹⁶² **Very good progress**

Protection of Whistle-blowers

The Agency for the Prevention of Corruption (APC) is responsible for preparing training programs and providing training for officials responsible for signalling in public institutions, depending on the request of the institution. However, APC is facing a lack of budget making it impossible to provide training for whistleblowing officials without the contribution of an external donor.¹⁶³

Additionally, APC is responsible for developing training programs and conducting training sessions for officials responsible for reporting in public institutions, based on the institution's request. "The number of whistleblowing cases within the justice system for the period January 2022 to November 2022 is zero (0) whistleblowing cases".¹⁶⁴ **Some progress**

Some progress was made in freedom of media in 2022.

b) Civil society

The means of assessing civil society include:

- *CSO consultations;*
- *promotion of consultation platforms; and*
- *CSO public financing.*

Civil Society Organizations (CSO) consultations

Central-level institutions organise public consultations using an improved online platform that visualises key statistics. At the municipal level, online consultations have slightly increased but still significantly lag behind those organised by relevant ministries at the central level.¹⁶⁵

In 2022, 3580 participants actively engaged in the public consultation process, 1295 more than in 2021.¹⁶⁶ The number of submitted comments was notably larger in 2022 as well. They submitted 3446 comments through public consultation platforms, meetings, working groups, and written submissions, out of which 1373 were fully incorporated, 460 partly accepted and 1493 rejected.¹⁶⁷

Line ministries must enhance their capacity to utilise these tools for policy-making and to improve the effectiveness of conducting public consultations and regulatory impact assessments. Public consultations for various draft legislation are often organised very late in the process, and civil society inputs are not consistently incorporated. Not all ministries organise such consultations in line with existing regulations.¹⁶⁸ In particular, the Ministry of Communities and Returns, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Diaspora have not published any documents on the platform for the reporting period.¹⁶⁹ **Some progress**

¹⁶⁰ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 12 October 2022.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Kosovo Indicators on the level of media freedom and journalists' safety 2022, at https://agk-ks.org/site/assets/files/3051/indicators_on_the_level_of_media_freedom_and_journalists_safety_2022.pdf.

¹⁶³ Kosovo Democratic Institute, Law on Protection of Whistle-blowers, December 2022, at <https://kdi-kosova.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Raport-Zbatimi-i-ligjit-per-sinjalizim-ne-sektorin-e-drejtisesise-ENGgg.pdf>

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 12 October 2022.

¹⁶⁶ Office on Good Governance, Government of Kosovo, Annual Report 2021 for Public Consultations in the Government of Republic of Kosovo, at <https://konsultimet.rks-gov.net/Storage/Docs/Doc-62bab5fb93501.pdf>, and Annual Report 2022 for, at <https://konsultimet.rks-gov.net/Storage/Docs/Doc-645b4128e5f52.pdf>.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 12 October 2022.

¹⁶⁹ Office on Good Governance, Government of Kosovo, Annual Report 2020 for Public Consultations in the Government of Republic of Kosovo, March 2021, at <https://konsultimet.rks-gov.net/Storage/Docs/Doc-606c64325720c.pdf>.

Promotion of consultation platforms

The information campaign for the Comprehensive Platform for Public Consultation continued during the reporting period. Guides and promotional videos on how to utilise the Online Consultation Platform were shared with the public, not just via the platform itself, but also through daily posts on social networks and publications on online portals.¹⁷⁰

During the campaign, there was a concerted effort to increase awareness and promote greater inclusivity in all consultation processes. The promotional video primarily emphasised individuals with special needs by offering content in sign language for their community.¹⁷¹ **Some progress**

CSO public financing

The government has appointed public funds coordinators in each public central institution with the goal of improving the efficiency of funding for non-governmental organisations. The Ministry of Finance is tasked with the ongoing responsibility of monitoring and ensuring compliance with relevant regulations.¹⁷²

Despite enhancements made to the platform for financing civil society organisations, public officials face limitations in conducting public calls. Additionally, a technical working group has been established to evaluate the current regulatory framework.¹⁷³ **Good progress**

Some progress was made in civil society in 2022.

c) Legal framework

The means of assessing the legal framework regarding media and civil society include:

- *Law on Independent Media Commission;*
- *Law on Radio Television of Kosovo; and*
- *Law on Access to Public Documents.*

Law on Independent Media Commission

In 2022, the government initiated the amendment of the Law on Independent Media Commission to align it with the EU's Audiovisual Media Services Directive, but it was not adopted.¹⁷⁴ **No progress**

Law on Radio Television of Kosovo (RTK)

No progress has been made in amending the Law on Radio Television of Kosovo.¹⁷⁵ **No progress**

Law on Access to Public Documents

Efficient implementation of the Law on Access to Public Documents remains a challenge. Despite the appointment of a new Commissioner for Information and Privacy, they do not have enough supervisory powers to ensure an independent appeal mechanism if public bodies deny or ignore requests.¹⁷⁶ **No progress**

No progress was made in the legal framework in 2022.

¹⁷⁰ Comprehensive platform for public consultation at <https://konsultimet.rks-gov.net/singlePost.php?Post=70017>.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 8 November 2023.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 12 October 2022.

| Media and Civil Society | No Progress | Limited Progress | Some Progress | Good Progress | Very Good Progress |
|-------------------------|-------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Freedom of media | | | ✓ | | |
| Civil Society | | | ✓ | | |
| Legal framework | ✓ | | | | |
| Overall progress | | ✓ | | | |

Table 39. The overall progress Media and Civil Society

2) Political stability

To assess whether Kosovo has achieved progress in meeting the political stability criteria, the following sub-indicators were used:

- functioning of institutions* - or information on the functioning of main institutions, such as government and parliament;
- security and public order* - or information on inter-ethnic violations, acts of terrorism, and protests;
- relations between government and opposition* - or information on whether the transfer of power is democratic, presence of opposition in the parliament, and opposition support to the government; and
- constitutional and legal order* - or information on whether the Constitution is being fully and accurately implemented.

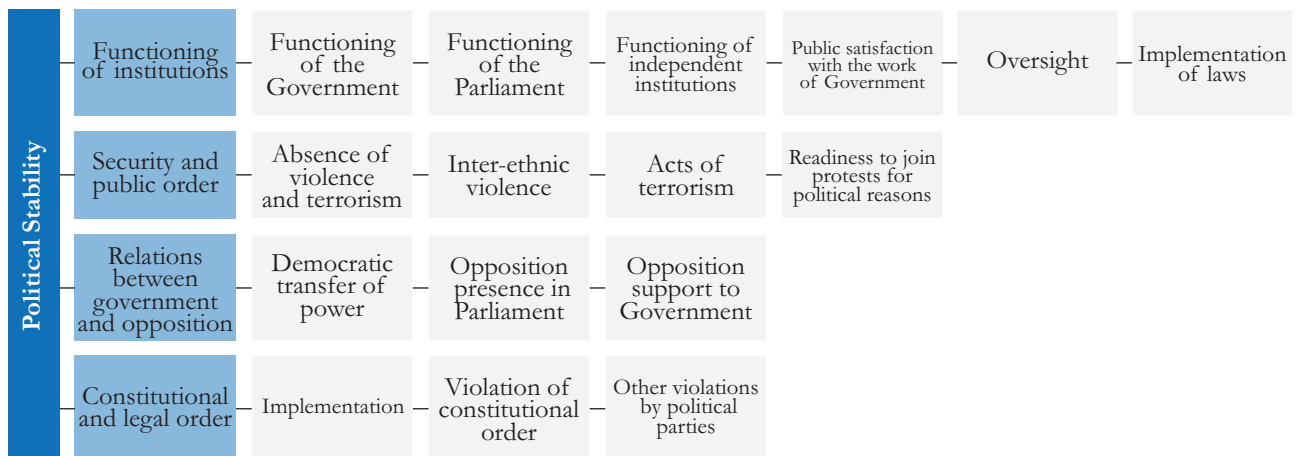


Figure 22. Political Stability and its sub-indicators

a) Functioning of Institutions

The means of assessing the functioning of institutions include:

- *functioning of the government;*
- *functioning of the parliament;*
- *functioning of the independent institutions;*
- *public satisfaction with the work of the government;*
- *oversight; and*
- *implementation of laws.*

Functioning of the Government

The Vetëvendosje-led government maintains a strong majority in the Assembly and persists in advancing

its ambitious EU reform agenda. However, challenges arose due to the ongoing absence of cross-party cooperation and disagreements within the majority.¹⁷⁷ **Limited Progress**

Functioning of the Parliament

The Assembly faced ongoing obstacles due to the absence of a decision-making quorum and insufficient attempts to foster cross-party consensus. The Assembly encountered prolonged challenges in adopting laws and making essential appointments to public bodies. The boycott by Srpska Lista MPs rendered the adoption of laws in the vital legislation category impossible. Additionally, the Assembly did not reach consensus on many issues, including on energy policy, salary increases in the public sector, strikes in the education sector, security strategy and economic policy.¹⁷⁸ **Limited progress**

Functioning of the Independent Institutions

In 2022, the Assembly failed to elect a significant number of officials, which caused 18 key institutions to be non-operational or at least partially operational.¹⁷⁹ It delayed appointing the Commission for the Protection of Competition. Following the expiration of the chairman and previous committee's mandate in June 2021, the institution remained without a functioning body. Although the government proposed the appointment of five members, the vote was delayed by one and a half months, due to a lack of participation and quorum.¹⁸⁰

The appointment of board members of public enterprises was criticised as political, after the government appointed members that were affiliated with Vetëvendosje.¹⁸¹ The inaction in appointing board members of financial institutions is considered to relate with efforts of political parties to appoint individuals that are affiliated with them politically.¹⁸² **No progress**

Public satisfaction with the work of the government

In autumn 2022, UNDP Public Pulse highlighted a decrease in people's satisfaction with the work of the government (44.9%) compared to autumn 2021 (59.5%).¹⁸³ The satisfaction levels in 2022 decreased by - 24.5%. **No progress**

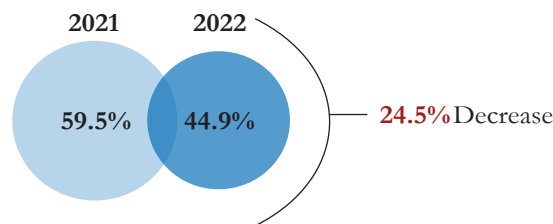


Figure 23. Public satisfaction with the executive

Oversight

Parliamentary control over the government's activities and the independence of its oversight institutions has been nearly non-existent. The Assembly has, in at least 18 instances, not granted approval for the annual reports of constitutional institutions and independent agencies. In addition, in 18 cases, it has failed to elect collegial and individual bodies, thereby hindering their functioning.¹⁸⁴

Parliamentary oversight of law implementation continues to be one of the key challenges. Efforts to enhance parliamentary oversight of all government branches have been made; however, effective control remains weak. The Assembly improved its oversight of the executive through sessions for parliamentary questions, ministerial hearings by committees and monitoring the implementation of laws. The Assembly must employ all available tools to hold the government and other institutions accountable.¹⁸⁵

The Assembly appointed the Commission for the Protection of Competition with significant delays.

¹⁷⁷ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 8 November 2023.

¹⁷⁸ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 8 November 2023.

¹⁷⁹ Kosovo Law Institute, Monitoring report of the work of the Assembly of Kosovo for 2022, April 2023, at <https://kli-ks.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/DOBET-Raport-i-monitorimit-te-punes-se-Kuvendit-te-Kosoves-per-vitin-2022.pdf>

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ Gazetablic, February 2022, at <https://gazetablic.com/qeveria-emeroi-ish-kandidatin-e-vv-se-ne-bordin-e-trepces/>

¹⁸² Radio Evropa e lirë, April 2023, at <https://www.evropaelire.org/a/insitucionet-udheheqes-borde-anetare-/32354089.html>.

¹⁸³ UNDP, Public Pulse Brief XXII, 5 July 2022, and UNDP, Public Pulse Brief XXIII, 9 March 2023.

¹⁸⁴ Kosovo Law Institute, Monitoring report of the work of the Assembly of Kosovo for 2022, April 2023, at <https://kli-ks.org/dobet-raport-i-monitorimit-te-punes-se-kuvendit-te-kosoves-per-vitin-2022/>.

¹⁸⁵ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 12 October 2022.

Since June 2021, when the chairman's mandate and the previous committee ended, this institution has operated without this essential body. The government proposed five members for the commission, but the vote was significantly delayed until June 14, 2022, due to a lack of participation and a quorum.

The appointment of two judges to the Constitutional Court faced two consecutive voting failures in December 2021 and May 2022 due to insufficient votes. The Assembly finally proposed a judge on November 24, 2022.¹⁸⁶ **No progress**

Implementation of laws

The Assembly monitored the implementation of the following laws: Law on Critical Infrastructure, Law on Mental Health, Law on Public Internal Financial Control, Law on the Electronic Supervision of Persons whose movement is limited by the decision of the Court, Law on Notary, Law on Extended Powers for Confiscation of Assets, Law on Education Inspectorate in the Republic of Kosovo, Law on Forests in Kosovo.¹⁸⁷ Public data regarding the implementation of these laws is not available.

No progress was made in the functioning of institutions in 2022.

b) Security and Public Order

The means of assessing security and public order include:

- *absence of violence and terrorism;*
- *inter-ethnic violence;*
- *acts of terrorism; and*
- *readiness to join protests for political reasons.*

Absence of violence and terrorism

In 2021, Kosovo was placed in the 43.4 percentile rank of the World Bank's Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism Indicator; with 0 indicating no risk and 100 indicating a high risk.¹⁸⁸ In 2022, Kosovo was placed in the 37.3 percentile rank.¹⁸⁹ **Some progress**

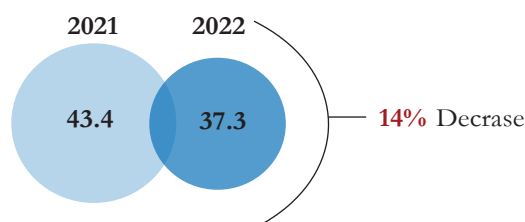


Figure 24. Absence of political violence and terrorism

Inter-ethnic violence

In 2022, 11 cases were reported against members of minority communities, which is 3 less than in 2021. **Limited progress**

Acts of terrorism

No acts of terrorism were reported in 2021. No data available for 2022.¹⁹⁰

Readiness to join protests for political reasons

In 2022, a significantly lower number of respondents (24.2%) were willing to protest for political reasons compared to 2021 (36.7%). This represents a 34% decrease in the readiness to protest compared to 2021. Kosovo Albanians and members of other Kosovo communities demonstrated a reduced readiness to

¹⁸⁶ Kosovo Law Institute, Monitoring report of the work of the Assembly ondit-te-Kosoves-pef Kosovo for 2022, April 2023, at <https://kli-ks.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/DOBET-Raport-i-monitorimit-te-punes-se-Kuvendit-te-Kosoves-per-vitin-2022.pdf>.

¹⁸⁷ Balkans Group interview with an official from the Assembly of Kosovo, Prishtina, November 2023.

¹⁸⁸ World Bank Governance indicators, Kosovo, at <https://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/Home/Reports>.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ US Department of State, Country reports on terrorism 2020, at <https://www.state.gov/reports/country-reports-on-terrorism-2020/kosovo/>.

protest, whereas Kosovo Serbs exhibited an increased readiness to protest for political reasons.¹⁹¹ **No progress**

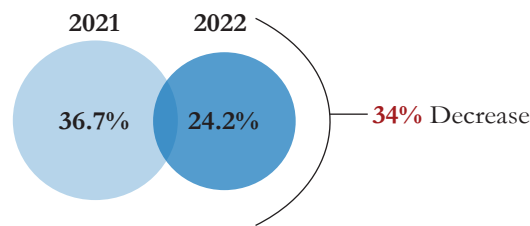


Figure 25. Readiness to protest

Limited progress was made in security and public order in 2022.

c) Relations between Government and the opposition

The means of assessing the relations between government and opposition include:

- *democratic transfer of power;*
- *opposition presence in the parliament; and*
- *opposition support to the government.*

Democratic transfer of power

In 2022, there was no development under this means of assessment.

Opposition presence in Parliament

A polarised political atmosphere and challenges in attaining a decision-making quorum continued to hamper the Assembly's operations, despite the government's reliance on a substantial majority. This results from both inadequate management of the legislative agenda by the majority and opposition, and Assembly members (MPs) abstaining from voting to obstruct the adoption of legislation.¹⁹² **No progress**

Relations between the Government and the Opposition

Opposition parties generally engage in the Assembly and, on some occasions, support key EU-related legislation. The majority agreed with the opposition to establish two ad hoc committees in the Assembly, including on electoral reforms.¹⁹³ However, significant disagreements persist between the majority and opposition. The Assembly frequently faced challenges in voting on legislative proposals because of the absence of a decision-making quorum, despite the government maintaining a majority in the Assembly.¹⁹⁴

Limited progress

Limited progress was made in relations between government and opposition in 2022.

d) Constitutional and legal order

The means of assessing the constitutional and legal order include:

- *implementation;*
- *violation of constitutional order; and*
- *other violations by political parties.*

¹⁹¹ UNDP, Public Pulse Brief XXIII, November 2022, at <https://www.undp.org/kosovo/publications/public-pulse-brief-xxiii>.

¹⁹² European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 8 November 2023.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

Implementation

In 2022, the Law on Declaration, Origin, and Control of Assets and Gifts was not fully implemented the same goes for the Law on Money Laundering. Although the Law on Prevention of Conflict of Interests in Discharge of a Public Function is being implemented, it requires full implementation. Whistle-blowing mechanisms and protection requirements still need strengthening and implementation in both the public and private sectors.

The legislation for prevention of corruption was adopted. The new Law on Agency for Prevention of Corruption aims to enhance the implementation of laws such as: the Law on Declaration, Origin and Control of Assets and Gifts; Law on Protection of Whistleblowers; and Law on Prevention of Conflict of Interests in Discharge of a Public Function. However, the effective implementation of certain laws remains largely pending.¹⁹⁵ **Limited progress**

Violation of constitutional order

In 2022, the Constitutional Court published 20 judgments finding violations of the constitutional order in 16 of them. Among these, 14 cases involved violations by regular courts, whereas 2 of them pertained to violations by other institutions.¹⁹⁶ **No progress**

Other violations by political parties

No data has been reported for political parties violating legal orders in 2021 and there is no data for 2022 either.

Limited progress was made in constitutional and legal order in 2022.

| Political stability | No Progress | Limited Progress | Some Progress | Good Progress | Very Good Progress |
|---|-------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Functioning of institutions | ✓ | | | | |
| Security and Public Order | | ✓ | | | |
| Relations between the government the and opposition | | ✓ | | | |
| Constitutional and legal order | | ✓ | | | |
| Overall progress | | ✓ | | | |

Table 40. The overall progress for Political Stability

Limited progress was made in Political Stability in 2022.

3. Elections

To assess whether Kosovo has achieved progress in meeting the elections criteria, the following sub-indicators were used:

- election administration* - or information on the voting register, counting of votes, election results and transparency of the CEC;
- campaign environment* - or information on political parties' access to media, political campaigns, political environment and COVID-19 measures during elections;
- legal framework* - or information on the adoption, revision or implementation of specific legislation pertaining to elections; and
- women's participation* - or information on women's representation in elections and women candidates' visibility in political campaigns.

¹⁹⁵ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 8 November 2023.

¹⁹⁶ Balkans Group interview with an official from the Constitutional Court, October 2023.

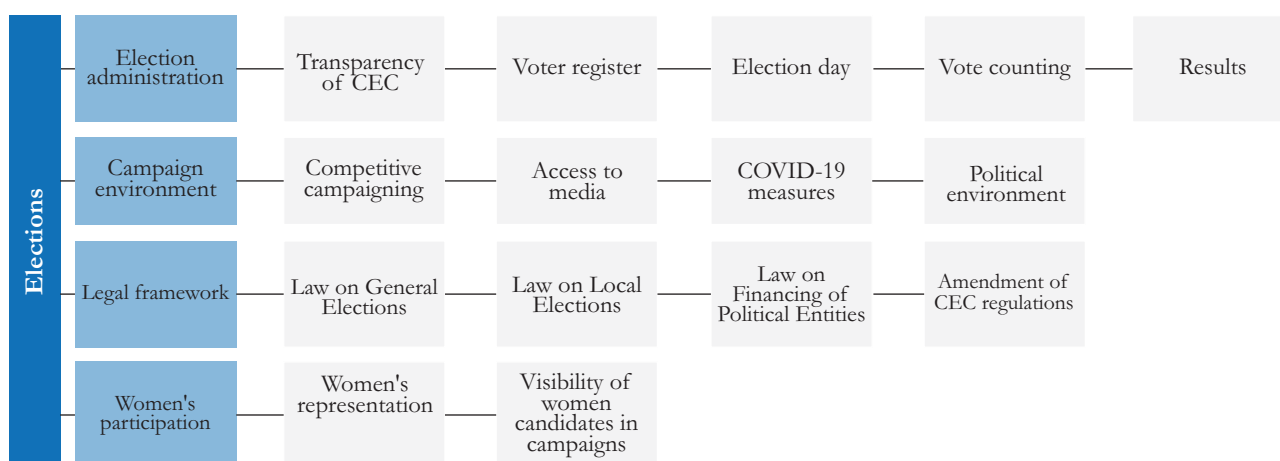


Figure 26. Elections and its sub-indicators

a) Election Administration

The means of assessing election administration include:

- *transparency of CEC;*
- *voter register;*
- *election day;*
- *vote counting; and*
- *results.*

Note: This part of the report covers the developments pertaining to elections and the Central Election Commission. No elections took place in 2022, resulting in no data for the Barometer's sub-indicators, such as: election day; vote counting; results; campaign environment (competitive campaigning, access to media, COVID-19 measures); political environment; and women's participation (women's representations, and visibility of women candidates in campaigns). The focus will be on the legal framework and EU Election Observation Missions (EU EOM) recommendations, particularly transparency of CEC and voter register.

Transparency of Central Election Commission (CEC)

The 2021 EU Election Observation Mission (EU EOM) proposed amending the Law on General Elections (LGE) to specify and limit the reasons for removal of the Chair and members of the Central Election Commission (CEC).

Members of civil society and the Ad Hoc Committee met with representatives from the EU Election Follow-up Mission (EU EFM) and reaffirmed their support for this recommendation. They emphasised the importance of incorporating it into the electoral reform. But, because implementing this recommendation involves changes to the LGE, it cannot be evaluated until the reform process is completed.¹⁹⁷

Voter register

Little progress has been made for the implementation of the EU election observation missions (EOM) recommendation to introduce a mechanism for automatic removal of deceased persons from the civil register and database of issued IDs once the Central Register Agency has received information from hospitals and religious institutions. The only change so far is that they have improved their cooperation with religious institutions in reporting deaths.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁷ European Union, Election Follow-up Mission to Kosovo Final Report, 14 November – 8 December 2022, at https://www.ecas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/EU%20EFM%20XKX%202022%20FR_en.pdf.

¹⁹⁸ European Union, Election Follow-up Mission to Kosovo Final Report, 14 November – 8 December 2022, at https://www.ecas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/EU%20EFM%20XKX%202022%20FR_en.pdf.

In addition, CEC is in the process of developing a software application with two-factor verification. They plan to finalise it by June 2023. This application will enable Out of Kosovo voters to apply and register online.¹⁹⁹

Results

EU Election Observation Missions recommend adding provisions that allow for challenging the final election results released by the CEC, clarifying deadlines, and removing ambiguities. The work on the implementation of this recommendation is ongoing.

b) Legal framework

The means of assessing the legal framework regarding elections include:

- *Law on General Elections;*
- *Law on Local Elections;*
- *Law on Financing of Political Entities; and*
- *Amendments to CEC regulations.*

Law on General Elections

The Law on General Elections was not amended.²⁰⁰ **No progress**

Law on Local Elections

The Law on Local Elections was not amended.²⁰¹ **No progress**

Law on Financing of Political Entities

In 2022, the Law on Financing of Political Entities was amended and published in the official gazette.²⁰² The new amendments improve transparency and other key aspects, but further amendments on candidates' financing, digitalisation and third party campaigns are considered to be needed.²⁰³ **Very good progress**

Amendments to Central Election Commission (CEC) regulations

The Regulation 12/2023 was not amended.²⁰⁴ The Regulation 14/2013 was not amended.²⁰⁵ **No progress**

Limited progress was made in the legal framework in 2022.

4) Public Administration Reform

The sub-indicators used to measure progress in public administration include:

- functioning of public administration* - whether the appointment and/or dismissal of civil servants is free from political influence;
- service delivery* - whether public administrative services have improved at the local and central level;
- public finances* - whether budget transparency, public procurement procedures, and so on, have been improved;

199 Ibid.

200 Law no. 08/L-228 on General Elections in the Republic of Kosovo, at <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=77074>.

201 Law no. 03/L-072 on Local elections, at https://kqz-ks.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/LIGJI__NR._03_L-072_P%C3%8BR_ZGJEDHJET_LOKALE_N%C3%8B_REPUBLIK%C3%8BN_E_KOSOV%C3%8BS.pdf.

202 Law no. 08/L-122 on the Financing of Political Parties, at <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDocumentDetail.aspx?ActID=62600>.

203 Telegrafi, Kosovo Democratic Institute notes gaps in the law on financing political parties, December 2022, at <https://telegrafi.com/kdi-vlereson-se-kamangesi-ne-ligjin-per-financimin-e-partive-politike/>

204 CEC, Election Regulations, at <https://kqz-ks.org/rregullat-zgjedhore/>.

205 Ibid.

- d) *representation* - whether the participation of vulnerable groups, such as women and minorities is increased; and
- e) *legal framework* - whether laws and strategies have been adopted and/or are being implemented.

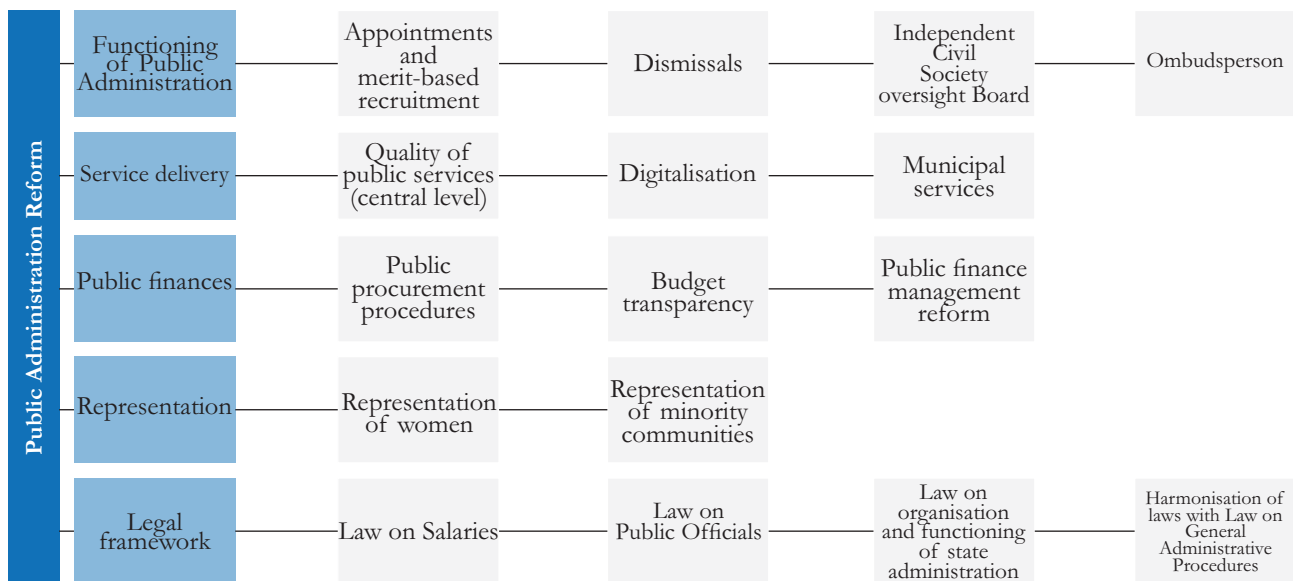


Figure 27. Public Administration and its sub-indicators

a) Functioning of Public Administration

The means of assessing the functioning of public administration include:

- *appointments, dismissals and merit-based recruitment;*
- *independent civil society oversight board; and*
- *Ombudsperson.*

Appointments, dismissals and merit-based recruitment

Findings within the 3rd principle of SIGMA's, for merit-based recruitments, show that Kosovo has improved compared to the previous year.²⁰⁶ The level of openness, transparency and fairness of recruitment into the civil service in 2021/2022 is rated at level 3 out of 5.²⁰⁷ The indicator assessing the effective protection from political influence on senior managerial positions, ranks at level 1 out of 5, compared to the previous year that was 0.²⁰⁸

However, a fully merit-based recruitment system is lacking and the public sector struggles to promptly and effectively fill open positions.²⁰⁹ This has led to significant weaknesses in administrative capacity. The extensive reliance on acting positions, such as senior managerial levels, and inefficient external recruitment procedures for said positions, have compromised the quality of management in the institutions.²¹⁰

There is no data available on dismissal of civil servants. Kosovo ranks the lowest out of Western Balkan countries for public availability of data and official reports regarding civil service and employees.²¹¹

Limited progress

²⁰⁶ WeBER 2.0, National PAR Monitor 2021/2022 – Kosovo, 16 August 2023, at <https://www.legalpoliticalstudies.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/WeBER-2.0-National-PAR-Monitor-2021-2022-Final.pdf>.

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 8 November 2023.

²¹⁰ Ibid.

²¹¹ Ibid.

| Year | 2019/2020 | 2020/2021 |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| WeBER's general score on merit-based recruitment | 2/5 | 3/5 |
| WeBER's general score on effective protection of senior civil servants' position from unwanted political interference | 0/5 | 1/5 |

Table 41. Merit-based recruitment and political influence on senior managerial positions

Independent Civil Service Oversight Board

The Constitutional Court overruled the decision for the dismissal of all Board members, thus the decision of the Assembly for the election of members remains in force.²¹² The Board continues its work with only five members, without members from the non-Albanian community.²¹³ **Very good progress**

Ombudsperson

The institution of Ombudsperson in the year of 2022 issued a considerable number of recommendations to administrative institutions. The total rate of implementation of all issued recommendations, stands at 23%, while 46% of recommendations issued in 2021 had been implemented as of the end of 2022.²¹⁴

The Ombudsperson, addressing the applicants' complaints, tackled physical accessibility for individuals with disabilities at the Pension Administration and access to public documents.²¹⁵ Additionally, the Ombudsperson issued a report, urging the Tax Administration to amend the Regulation no. 01/2022, to ensure the taxpayers' right to appeal decisions of Organisational Units for Fines and Punishments (OUFP).²¹⁶ **Very good progress**

Good progress was made in the functioning of public administration in 2022.

b) Service delivery

The means of assessing the service delivery include:

- *quality of public services;*
- *digitalisation; and*
- *municipal services.*

Quality of public services (central level)

Mechanisms for ensuring the quality of public services are in place. However, in 2022, there are no reports on the quality and/or outcomes of these mechanisms.²¹⁷

The Ministerial Council on Public Administration Reform, which serves as the primary oversight coordinator for PAR and functions as the coordination mechanism between line ministries, failed to effectively fulfil its obligations.²¹⁸

Despite some progress in aligning the sectoral laws with the Law on General Administrative Procedure and in digitising public services, the overall progress in public administration reforms remained insufficient to deliver concrete results.²¹⁹

However, in comparison to last year, public satisfaction with public services increased by 26%.²²⁰ **Some progress**

²¹² Constitutional Court, Decision of the case KO 127/21, para. 119.

²¹³ IOBCSK, Annual Work Report 2022, at [https://kpmshc.rks-gov.net/assets/cms/uploads/files/Raporti%20vjetor%202022-anglisht.docx\(1\).pdf](https://kpmshc.rks-gov.net/assets/cms/uploads/files/Raporti%20vjetor%202022-anglisht.docx(1).pdf)

²¹⁴ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 8 November 2023.

²¹⁵ Ombudsperson Institution, Annual Report 2022, at file <https://oik-rks.org/en/2023/05/31/annual-report-2022/>

²¹⁶ Ibid.

²¹⁷ WeBER 2.0, National PAR Monitor 2021/2022 – Kosovo, 16 August 2023, at <https://www.legalpoliticalstudies.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/WeBER-2.0-National-PAR-Monitor-2021-2022-Final.pdf>.

²¹⁸ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 8 November 2023.

²¹⁹ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 8 November 2023.

²²⁰ Regional Cooperation Council, Balkan Barometer 2022, at <https://www.balkaninnovation.com/docs/20/balkan-barometer-2022--public-opinion>.

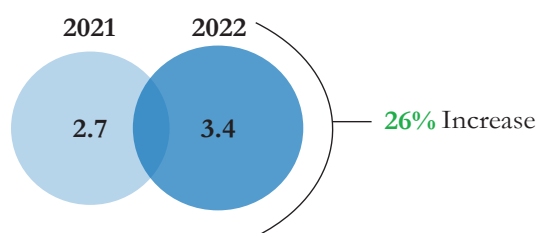


Figure 28. Public satisfaction with public service provision

Digitalisation

In 2021, Kosovo had a score of 2.8 (on a scale of 1 to 5) on the accessibility to public services via digital channels (online services, website, smartphone app). In 2022, the score went up to 3.4.²²¹ Governmental efforts are underway to establish a foundational framework for technological advancements in the digitalization of public services. Despite progress in adopting digital platforms for specific services, the overall landscape of public service digitalization is still in the initial phases of development.²²²

E-government services are efficiently managed through the e-Kosova portal. The majority of public institutions have electronic records, and those without are assisted by the Agency of Information and Society (AIS) in establishing them. In addition, an interoperability platform connects 24 electronic systems, facilitating data exchange. With the recent regulation of Electronic Identification and Signature by the Law, the scope of e-services is expected to expand, contributing to improved personal data security.²²³

Limited progress

Municipal services

In 2021, the performance of the municipalities in 19 fields was 56.8%.²²⁴ For 2022, there are no reports that provide substantiated information about the quality and/or outcomes of public service work.²²⁵

Some progress was made in the service delivery in 2022.

c) Public finances

The means of assessing public finances include:

- *public procurement procedures;*
- *budget transparency; and*
- *public finance management reform.*

Public procurement procedures

The central procurement authority consistently publishes reports on the implementation of the public procurement policy, and the public procurement portal provides user-friendly access to complete tender documentation. However, specific reports for each institution are not published.²²⁶ **Good progress**

Budget transparency

The Ministry of Finance does not make its reports on Public Internal Financial Control (PIFC) available online and the PIFC Strategy is outdated. Quality assessments for reviews of internal audit reports are not published, and most ministries lack sufficient financial management and control information. There is a need for more proactive engagement with the public, including issuing press releases and making media appearances, along with improving the accessibility and readability of audit reports. While the

221 Regional Cooperation Council, Balkan Barometer 2021 and 2022, at <https://www.rcc.int/balkanbarometer/publications>.

222 European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 8 November 2023.

223 Digital Agenda Observatory, Final research on the state of e-government development & digital literacy in the targeted Western Balkan countries 2022, December 2022, at https://metamorphosis.org.mk/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/final-dao_en.pdf.

224 Performance Report of the Municipalities of Kosovo, at <https://mapl.rks-gov.net/raportet-vjetore-te-mapl-se/>.

225 WeBER 2.0, National PAR Monitor 2021/2022 – Kosovo, 16 August 2023, at <https://www.legalpoliticalstudies.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/WeBER-2.0-National-PAR-Monitor-2021-2022-Final.pdf>.

226 WeBER 2.0, National PAR Monitor 2021/2022 – Kosovo, 16 August 2023, at <https://www.legalpoliticalstudies.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/WeBER-2.0-National-PAR-Monitor-2021-2022-Final.pdf>.

National Audit Office (NAO) and State Audit Institution (SAI) utilise various communication methods, their reports lack citizen-friendly summaries.²²⁷

Overall, although Kosovo has availability of budgetary information, there is a deficiency in proactive engagement, accessibility of specific reports, and meaningful consultation with CSOs. Improving these areas would enhance accountability and foster increased public participation in governance processes.²²⁸ **Limited progress**

Public finance management reform

In December 2022, the government adopted a new Public Finance Management (PFM) strategy for the period 2022-2026. As a follow up, the 2022 monitoring report on PFM was adopted. Additionally, the concept document for the new law on PFM and accountability has been approved, and legislative preparatory work is currently underway.²²⁹ The implementation of PFM Strategy and its Action Plan is progressing slowly and requires a faster pace.²³⁰ **Good progress**

Some progress was made in public finances in 2022.

d) Representation

The means of assessing the representation of marginalised groups include:

- *women’s representation; and*
- *representation of minority communities.*

Women’s representation

In 2022, out of 6268 women in the professional category, 673 held managerial positions, representing a decrease of 25.49% compared to 2021.²³¹ **No progress**

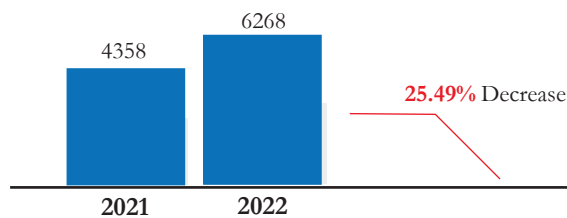


Table 63. Women’s representation

Representation of minority communities

In 2021, 1813 members of the minority communities worked at the central and local levels. In 2022, this number decreased to 1148 members.²³² This represents a decrease of 36.7% in minority representation at the central and local levels. **No progress**

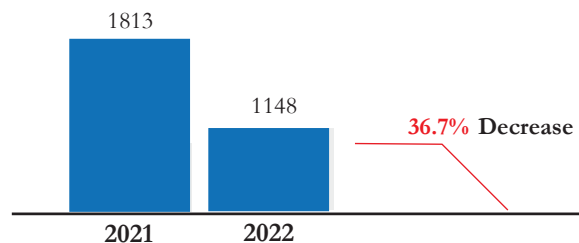


Table 64. Minorities’ representation

227 Ibid.

228 WeBER 2.0, National PAR Monitor 2021/2022 – Kosovo, 16 August 2023, at <https://www.legalpoliticalstudies.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/WeBER-2.0-National-PAR-Monitor-2021-2022-Final.pdf>.

229 European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 8 November 2023.

230 Ibid.

231 Data from Ministry of Internal Affairs, Department for the Management of Public Officials, November 2023.

232 Data from Ministry of Internal Affairs, Department for the Management of Public Officials, November 2023.

No progress was made in Representation in 2022.

e) Legal framework

The means of assessing the legal framework regarding public administration include:

- *Law on Salaries;*
- *Law on Public Officials;*
- *Law on Organisation and Functioning of State Administration; and*
- *Harmonisation of laws with Law on General Administrative Procedures.*

Law on Salaries

The Law on Salaries was in its drafting phase in 2022. By the end of the year, the Government proposed the Draft-Law on Salaries, and the Assembly adopted the new Law with 63 votes.²³³

The Opposition objected the law, citing concerns about the unknown coefficient value, identified shortcomings, and its failure to adequately address citizens' needs and demands.²³⁴ **Very good progress**

Law on Public Officials (LPO)

The implementation of the Law on Public Officials of 2020, was delayed, causing various constraints and gaps in administrative capacities across the public administration.²³⁵ In December 2022, the Government proposed the amended Draft-Law on Public Officials and the Assembly adopted the law with 58 votes.²³⁶

The Opposition did not participate in the voting process as it strongly opposes it. At the time, the EU office in Pristina has stated that this law violates and politicises the civil service, and the comments of EU, OECD/SIGMA were not taken into account.²³⁷ **No progress**

Law on Organisation and Functioning of Administration

The Law on the Organisation and Functioning of the Administration and Independent Agencies, which sets out the lines of accountability between first-level spending units and subordinate bodies, is not applied in a consistent manner. Additionally, there is slow progress in aligning internal organisation regulations for state institutions, including ministries, with the law. This slow alignment has weakened human resource management and planning.²³⁸ **Limited progress**

Harmonisation of (special sector) laws with the Law on General Administrative Procedure

Some progress was made in harmonising sectoral laws with the Law on General Administrative Procedure and in digitalising public services. However, the overall pace of public administration reforms remained insufficient to deliver tangible results in the reporting period and its implementation remains limited.²³⁹

Limited progress

Some progress was made in the legal framework in 2022.

²³³ The Assembly of the Republic of Kosovo Webpage, at <https://www.kuvendikosoves.org/eng/projektligjet-dhe-ligjet/draftlawopen/?draftlaw=436>.

²³⁴ KOHA.net, The Law on Salaries is approved, 22 December 2022, at <https://www.koha.net/arberi/358163/kuvendi-te-enjten-pritet-te-mbaje-tri-seanca/>.

²³⁵ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 12 October 2022.

²³⁶ Kallxo.com, The Assembly approves the Law on Public Officials, 22 December 2022, at <https://kallxo.com/lajm/kuvendi-miraton-ligjin-per-zyrtaret-publike/>.

²³⁷ Koha Ditore, EU: The Law on Salaries and the Law on Public Officials were approved without our recommendations, 23 December 2022, at <https://www.koha.net/arberi/358309/be-ja-e-shqetesuar-per-ligjin-per-paga-dhe-ate-per-zyrtaret-publike/>.

²³⁸ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 8 November 2023.

²³⁹ Ibid.

| Public Administration | No Progress | Limited Progress | Some Progress | Good Progress | Very Good Progress |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Functioning of public administration | | | | ✓ | |
| Service delivery | | | ✓ | | |
| Public finances | | | | ✓ | |
| Representation | ✓ | | | | |
| Legal Framework | | | ✓ | | |
| The Overall progress | | | ✓ | | |

Table 42. The overall progress for Public Administration

The overall progress in Democratisation is assessed as 'limited' in 2022.



Dimension IV

ECONOMY

Summary and Analysis

The European Union is a single market of 27 member states, hence economic growth and development are crucial to the Union.²⁴⁰ Economy refers to the existence of a functioning market economy and the capacity to cope with competitive pressures and market forces within the union.²⁴¹ Economic criteria are included under Block II: Economic Criteria of the NPISAA and are key to EU membership and rapprochement.²⁴²

In addition, economic criteria are placed under Pillar II: Competitiveness, Investment, and Sustainable Development within the ERA II. Much emphasis is placed on the promotion of direct investments, the improvement of the business environment, meeting energy efficiency and renewable energy targets, treatment of priority environmental challenges, as well as the enforcement of public procurement reforms.²⁴³

To assess whether Kosovo has achieved progress in meeting the economic criteria, one indicator is used:

1. Economic Development

This indicator uses a number of sub-indicators to measure the progress in this sector:

- a) *Macroeconomic stability* - or data on GDP growth, GDP per capita, trade balance and revenues;
- b) *Business environment* - or information on newly registered and terminated firms, size of the informal economy and availability of statistics on the economic sector;
- c) *Investments* - or data on FDI and reorganisation of KIESA;
- d) *Employment and safety at work* - or information regarding employment rate, fatalities at the workplace and the number of employees who have health insurance;
- e) *Human capital* - or data on migration and human capital; and
- f) *Legal framework* - whether laws and strategies have been adopted and/or are being implemented.

240 European Union website, at https://european-union.europa.eu/principles-countries-history/key-facts-and-figures/economy_en.

241 European Commission, Economic Criteria for Joining the EU, at https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/economic-and-fiscal-policy-coordination/international-economic-relations/enlargement-and-neighbouring-countries/enlargement/economic-accession-criteria_en.

242 Government of Kosovo, National Programme for Implementation of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (NPISAA), 2016, at https://kryeministri.rks-gov.net/repository/docs/National_Programme_for_Implementation_of_the_Stabilisation_and_Association_Agreement.pdf.

243 Kosovo- European Reform Agenda (ERA) II, 2020.

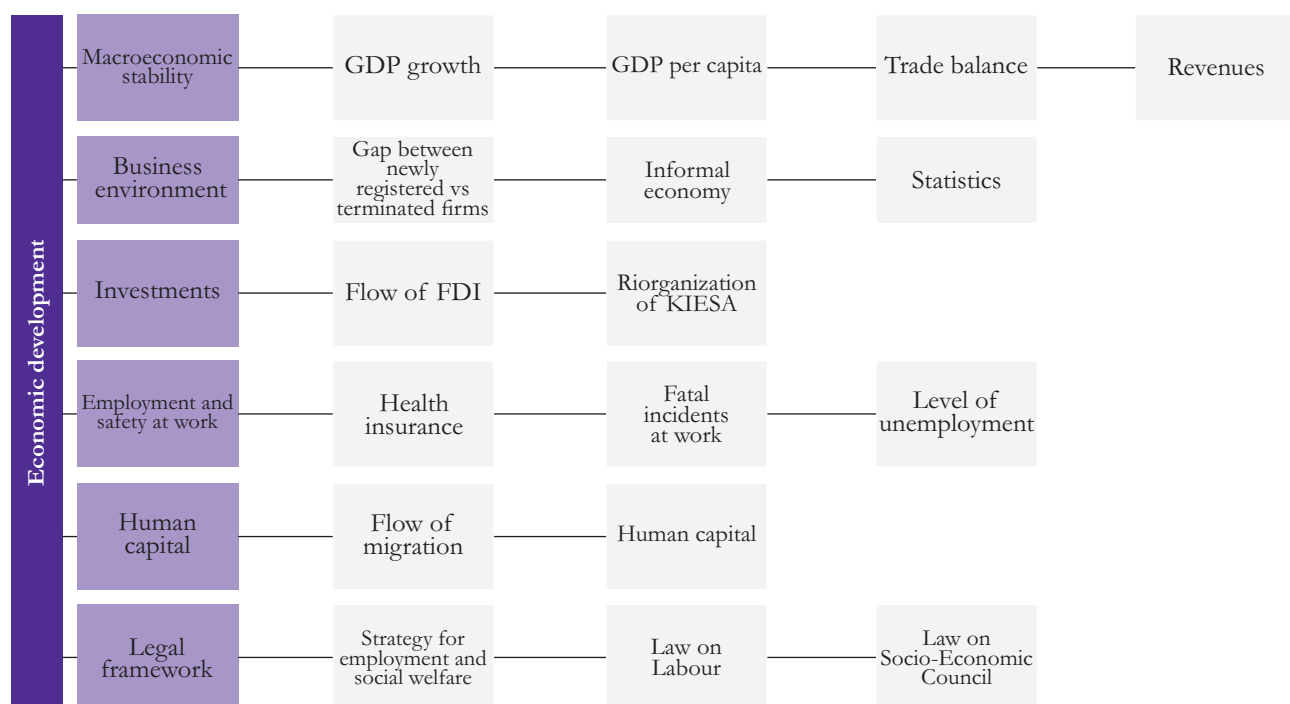


Figure 31. Economic development and its sub-indicators

a) Macroeconomic stability

The means of assessing macroeconomic stability include:

- *GDP growth;*
- *GDP per capita;*
- *trade balance; and*
- *revenues.*

GDP growth

In 2021, the GDP was EUR 7,342 million, marking an increase of 3% in growth. In 2022, the GDP reached 8,405. This marks an increase of 14.5 % compared to previous year.²⁴⁴ **Very good progress**

| Year | 2021 | 2022 |
|---------------------|---------------|---------------|
| GDP | 7,342 mil EUR | 8,405 mil EUR |
| Increase (%) | 14.5% | |

Table 43. GDP growth

GDP per capita

In 2021, the GDP per capita was USD 4,300, while in 2022 it was USD 4,900. This represents a 13.95% increase.²⁴⁵ **Limited progress**

| Year | 2021 | 2022 |
|-----------------------|-----------|-----------|
| GDP per capita | 4,300 USD | 4,900 USD |
| Increase (%) | 13.95 % | |

Table 44. GDP per capita

²⁴⁴ Ministry of Finance, Information booklet for citizens: Budget of Republic of Kosovo – 2022, at <https://mf.rks-gov.net/desk/inc/media/529659FE-E159-4026-8944-54E0CF33A53D.pdf>.

²⁴⁵ World Bank, GDP per capita (Kosovo), at <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD?locations=XK>.

Balance of Trade

In 2021 exports were EUR 749,720,392.43, imports were EUR 4,652,751,344.00 and the balance of trade was EUR -3,903,030,951.57. In 2022, exports were 920,404,658.00, imports were 5,639,393,264.68 and the balance of trade was -4,718,988,606.68.²⁴⁶ This represents a negative increase of 21% in the trade balance in 2022. **No progress**

| Year | 2021 | 2022 |
|----------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Exports | 749,720,392.43 EUR | 920,404,658.00 EUR |
| Imports | 4,652,751,344.00 EUR | 5,639,393,264.68 EUR |
| Trade balance | -3,903,030,951.57 EUR | -4,718,988,606.68 EUR |
| Percentage (%) | | -21% |

Table 45. Trade balance

Revenues

In 2021, total government revenues equalled EUR 2,484,600. In 2022, government revenues equalled EUR 2,622,400 representing a 5.54% increase in 2022 compared to 2021.²⁴⁷ **Limited progress**

Limited progress was made in macroeconomic stability in 2022.

| Year | 2021 | 2022 |
|---------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Government revenues | 2,484,600 EUR | 2,622,400 EUR |
| Increase (%) | | 5.54% |

Table 46. Government revenues

b) Business environment

The means of assessing the business environment include:

- *gap between newly registered and terminated firms;*
- *informal economy; and*
- *statistics.*

Gap between newly registered and terminated firms

In 2021, the number of newly registered firms was 10,649, and that of terminated ones was 1608. In 2022, the number of newly registered firms was 11,024, and that of terminated ones was 1784. This represents an increase of 6.66% in terminated firms in relation to newly registered firms.²⁴⁸ **No progress**

| Year | 2021 | 2022 |
|------------------------|--------|--------|
| Newly registered firms | 10,649 | 11,024 |
| Terminated firms | 1,608 | 1,784 |
| Ratio | 0.15 | 0.16 |
| Increase (%) | | 6.66% |

Table 71. Newly registered and terminated firms

Informal economy

Although precise data on the informal economy's percentage of GDP is unavailable, reports indicate that the informal sector remained around 30% in both 2021 and 2022, with no reported changes.²⁴⁹ **No progress**

²⁴⁶ Kosovo Agency of Statistics, turnover of goods in Kosovo, International Trade.

²⁴⁷ Kosovo Agency of Statistics, Structure of General Government Revenues.

²⁴⁸ Kosovo Agency of Statistics, Active enterprises by economic sections by quarter and new \ extinguished enterprises.

²⁴⁹ European Commission, Country Report Kosovo 2021 and International Monetary Fund, Republic of Kosovo 2020 Article IV Consultation-Press Release; Staff Report; and statement by the Executive Director for Republic of Kosovo, February 2021, at <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/CR/Issues/2021/02/17/Republic-of-Kosovo-2020-Article-IV-Consultation-Press-Release-Staff-Report-and-Statement-by-50104>.

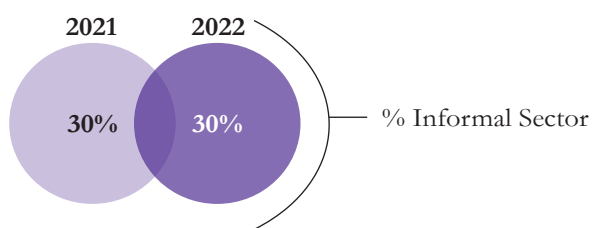


Figure 32. Informal sector

Statistics

In 2022, while structural business statistics and certain short-term statistics partially aligned with the EU Acquis, their availability was limited, and they lacked differentiation between public and private investments or sectors.²⁵⁰ KSA publishes quarterly data for some economic indicators and provides a business register.²⁵¹ The Central Bank of Kosovo regularly publishes time-series data related to both the financial and external sectors, offering valuable insights into the dynamics and trends within these economic domains.²⁵² Overall, little improvement has been done in aligning sectoral statistics with European standards or introducing new statistical products. **Limited progress**

No progress was made in the business environment in 2022.

c) Investments

The means of assessing investments include:

- *flow of FDI; and*
- *reorganisation of KIESA.*

Flow of Foreign Direct Investments (FDI)

In 2021, FDI inflows equalled EUR 421 million, whereas in 2022 they stood at EUR 732 million. This represents an increase of 74% in FDI inflows.²⁵³ It's worth noting that the two primary sectors in investments are financial and insurance, and real estate activities, attributed to the diaspora purchasing properties. **Good progress**

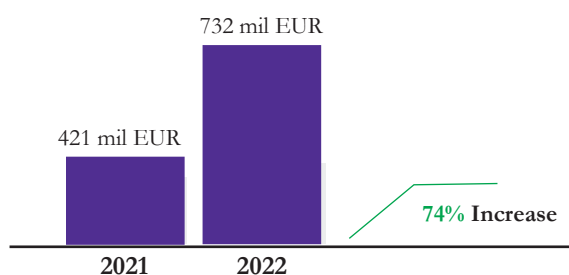


Figure 33. FDI inflows

Reorganisation of Kosovo Investment and Enterprise Support Agency (KIESA)

In the first reading, the Assembly passed two laws which aim at promoting investment and fostering private sector development: the Law on Technological and Industrial Parks and the Law on Sustainable Investment.

The laws regulate the restructuring of the Kosovo Investment and Enterprise Support Agency (KIESA) into an Agency for Support to Enterprises within the MIET, and the Agency for Investment and Export (AIE) under the Office of Prime Minister. By clearly defining responsibilities, these two agencies could enhance efficiency in supporting existing companies and attracting new investors.²⁵⁴ **No progress**

²⁵⁰ European Commission, Country Report Kosovo 2021.

²⁵¹ See more information see <https://ask.rks-gov.net/en/kosovo-agency-of-statistics/economy/statistical-business-register>.

²⁵² Central Bank of Kosovo, Time series, at <https://bqk-kos.org/statistics/time-series/?lang=en>.

²⁵³ Central Bank of Kosovo at <https://bqk-kos.org/statistikat/serite-kohore/>.

²⁵⁴ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 8 November 2023.

Some progress was made in investments in 2022.

d) Employment and safety at work

The means of assessing employment and safety at work include:

- *health insurance;*
- *fatal incidents at work; and*
- *level of unemployment.*

Health Insurance

In 2021, Kosovo had 165,048 insurance policies with a value of EUR 21,922,048 while in 2022, it had 292,430 insurance policies worth EUR 28,350,689.²⁵⁵ This represents an increase of 29% in insurance policy value in 2022 compared to 2021. Note, the numbers here represent the insurance policies in total. There is no specific data only for the workers covered by health insurance.

Kosovo has not yet established a public health insurance system, leaving the majority of workers without any health insurance coverage. The main problems include a lack of adequate sickness benefits and inadequate protection against work-related diseases.²⁵⁶ Besides, the Draft Law on Health Insurance, which aims to steer health sector reforms, has not been amended.²⁵⁷ **Some progress**

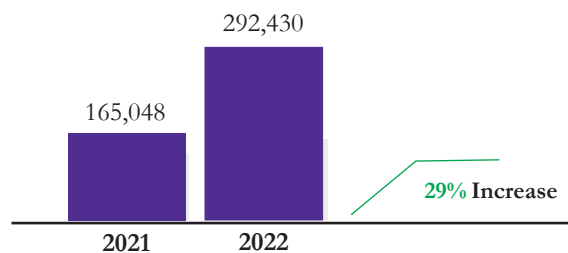


Figure 34. Insurance policies

Fatal incidents at work

In 2022, the Police Inspectorate conducted a total of 6,316 inspections, encompassing 51,058 workers, including 32,698 men and 18,360 women. Priority was given to cases of workplace accidents, specifically addressing the injuries sustained by workers engaged in work activities, resulting in 394 reported accidents.²⁵⁸

In 2021, 9 fatal incidents at work occurred whereas in 2022, the number of fatal incidents at work was 15. This represents a 66.6% increase in 2022.²⁵⁹ **No progress**

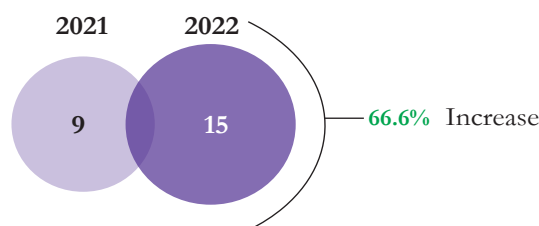


Figure 35. Fatal incidents at work

²⁵⁵ Balkans Group interview with an official from Agency of Statistics of Kosovo, Prishtina, November 2023.

²⁵⁶ Regional Cooperation Council, Performance of Western Balkan Economies Regarding the European Pillar of Social Rights 2022 review on Kosovo*, 2021, at <https://www.rcc.int/pubs/156/regional-overview-of-western-balkan-economies-regarding-the-european-pillar-of-social-rights>.

²⁵⁷ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 8 November 2023.

²⁵⁸ Labour Inspectorate, Labour Report for 2022, Prishtina 2023.

²⁵⁹ Ibid.

Level of unemployment

In 2021, the level of unemployment was 20.7%. In 2022, the figure was 12.6%.²⁶⁰ This represents a decrease of 39% in unemployment levels in 2022. **Some progress**

Some progress was made in employment and safety at work in 2022.

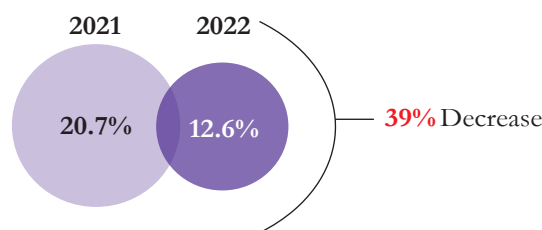


Figure 36. Level of unemployment

e) Human capital

The means of assessing human capital include:

- *flow of migration; and*
- *human capital.*

Flow of migration

In 2021, NET migration flow was -38606. Immigration stood at 4122 and emigration at 42728.²⁶¹ In 2022, there is no data provided by the Kosovo Agency of Statistics.

Human capital

No data are available for 2021 nor 2022.

No data to measure the progress in human capital in 2022.

f) Legal framework

The means of assessing the legal framework regarding the economy include:

- *Strategy on Employment and Social Policy;*
- *Law on Labour; and*
- *Law on Socio-Economic Council.*

Strategy on Employment and Social Policy

The implementation of the Sectoral Strategy 2018 - 2022 remained low. Moreover, the government has not adopted a new Sectoral Strategy.²⁶² **Limited progress**

Law on Labour

Despite recommendations, a new Law on Labour was not adopted in 2022. Law on Labour (No.03/L-212), adopted in 2010, is still in force.²⁶³ **No progress**

Law on Socio-Economic Council

A new Law on Socio-Economic Council to improve its capacities, decision-making and overall

²⁶⁰ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 8 November 2023.

²⁶¹ Population Assessment, 2021 at <https://ask.rks-gov.net/en/kosovo-agency-of-statistics/add-news/population-assessment-2021>.

²⁶² European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 8 November 2023 and Sectoral Strategy of MLSW in 2018 And 2019, November 2022, at http://kec-ks.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Zbatimi-i-Strategjisë-Sektoriale-të-MPMS_ALB-1.pdf.

²⁶³ Law No.03/L-212 on Labour, at <https://gzk.rks.gov.net/ActDocumentDetail.aspx?ActID=2735>.

performance was not adopted in 2022. Law (No. 04/L-008), adopted in 2011, is still applicable.²⁶⁴ **No progress**

No progress was made in the legal framework in 2022.

| Economic development | No Progress | Limited Progress | Some Progress | Good Progress | Very Good Progress |
|-------------------------------|-------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Macroeconomic stability | | ✓ | | | |
| Business environment | ✓ | | | | |
| Investments | | | ✓ | | |
| Employment and safety at work | | | ✓ | | |
| Human Capital | | | | | |
| Legal framework | ✓ | | | | |
| The Overall progress | | ✓ | | | |

Table 48. The overall progress for Economy

The overall progress in Economy is assessed as ‘limited’ in 2022.

²⁶⁴ Ibid.



Dimension V

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Summary and Analysis

Sustainable development is a core principle of the Treaty on European Union and a priority objective in the Union's internal and external policies.²⁶⁵

The Government's NPISAA places sustainable development policies, such as energy and environment, within Block III: European Standards - Approximation of Kosovo's Legislation with the EU Acquis.²⁶⁶ Moreover, both policy areas are placed under Pillar II: Competitiveness, Investment, and Sustainable Development within the ERA II.²⁶⁷

As regards energy, the focus is placed on the security of the energy supply, improved competitiveness, the promotion of renewable energy and increased access to the energy market.²⁶⁸ As for the environment, the emphasis is mainly on water and air quality, waste management, nature protection, industrial pollution control and risk management, chemicals and genetically modified organisms (GMOs), noise and forestry.²⁶⁹

To measure the progress in Sustainable Development the following indicators are used:

1. Energy
2. Environment



Figure 37. Sustainable Development and its indicators

Kosovo is committed to achieving sustainable development goals (SDGs) through the European integration process. The country has undertaken some positive steps on Agenda 2030, notably the establishment of the National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSD) which is responsible for coordinating SDG action and the preparation of the National Development Strategy 2016-2021.

1. Energy

To assess whether Kosovo has achieved progress in meeting the energy criteria, these sub-indicators were used:

- a) *Energy supply* - or information regarding the country's reliance on coal, security of supply, commercial loss, and planning and investment in the energy sector;
- b) *Energy efficiency* - or information regarding the implementation of the energy efficiency fund, energy savings, CO2 emissions, and improvement of power plants;
- c) *Renewable energy* - or data on renewable energy sources and plans for alternative energy sources; and
- d) *Legal framework* - whether laws and strategies have been adopted and/or are being implemented.

²⁶⁵ Sustainable Development Goals, European Commission, at https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/international-strategies/sustainable-development-goals_en.

²⁶⁶ Government of Kosovo, National Programme for Implementation of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (NPISAA), 2016, at https://kryeministri.rks-gov.net/repository/docs/National_Programme_for_Implementation_of_the_Stabilisation_and_Association_Agreement.pdf.

²⁶⁷ Kosovo-European Reform Agenda (ERA) II, 2020.

²⁶⁸ Government of Kosovo, National Programme for Implementation of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (NPISAA), 2016, at https://kryeministri.rks-gov.net/repository/docs/National_Programme_for_Implementation_of_the_Stabilisation_and_Association_Agreement.pdf.

²⁶⁹ Government of Kosovo, National Programme for Implementation of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (NPISAA), 2016, at https://kryeministri.rks-gov.net/repository/docs/National_Programme_for_Implementation_of_the_Stabilisation_and_Association_Agreement.pdf.

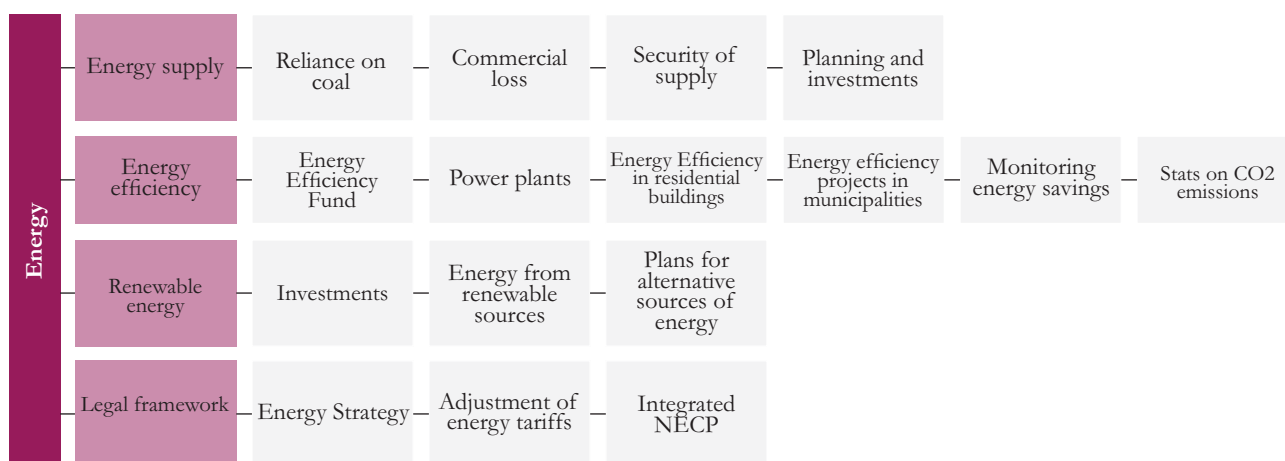


Figure 38. Energy and its sub-indicators

a) Energy supply

The means of assessing energy supply include:

- *reliance on coal;*
- *commercial loss;*
- *security of supply; and*
- *planning and investments.*

Reliance on coal

In the last quarter of 2021, the total coal production was 8.5 million tons, whereas the gross amount of electricity produced in thermal power plants was 5,770 GWh.²⁷⁰

In 2022 the value of coal production was about 8.2 million tons. The gross amount of electricity produced in thermal power plants was 5,678 GWh, 3% less than in 2021.²⁷¹ This represents a decrease of 1.5% in electricity production from coal. **No progress**

| Year | 2021 | 2022 |
|--|-------|-------|
| Coal (million tons) | 8,535 | 8,279 |
| Electricity produced from coal (gross value) | 5,770 | 5,678 |
| Ratio | 0.67 | 0.68 |
| Decrease (%) | 1.5% | |

Table 49. Energy production from coal

Commercial loss

In 2021, 1,538,147 (24.57%) were the total losses in the distribution network. In 2022, losses stood at 1,402,548 (22.64%).²⁷²

In 2021 commercial losses accounted for 12.11% of the demand in distribution.²⁷³ In 2022, the commercial losses accounted for 10.42%. **Limited progress**

| Year | 2021 | 2022 |
|-------------------------|--------|--------|
| Total commercial losses | 12.11% | 10.42% |
| Decrease (%) | 13.9 | |

Table 50. Commercial losses

²⁷⁰ Energy Regulatory Office, Annual Report 2021, March 2022.

²⁷¹ Energy Regulatory Office, Annual Report 2022, March 2023.

²⁷² Energy Regulatory Office, Annual Report 2021, March 2022 and Energy Regulatory Office, Annual Report 2021, March 2022.

²⁷³ Energy Regulatory Office, Annual Report 2021, March 2022 and Energy Regulatory Office, Annual Report 2021, March 2022.

Security of supply

In 2021, Kosovo imported 1,311,461 MWh of electricity.²⁷⁴ In 2022, Kosovo imported 761,245 MWh of electricity.²⁷⁵ This represents a decrease of 42% in the amount of energy imported in 2022. **Some progress**

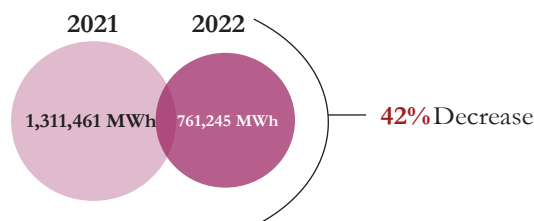


Figure 39. Energy imports

Planning and investments

Kosovo made limited progress in increasing investment in renewables and energy efficiency of public buildings in 2022.²⁷⁶ The project “Solar4Kosova - Solar for district heating” was initiated in cooperation with KfW and EBRD for production of thermal energy from sunlight, with an investment value of around EUR 80 million. However, Kosovo remains heavily reliant on coal-based, outdated and unreliable energy supply and needs to work toward attracting more investments.²⁷⁷ **Limited progress**

Limited progress was made in energy supply in 2022.

b) Energy efficiency

The means of assessing energy efficiency include:

- *Energy Efficiency Fund;*
- *power plants;*
- *energy efficiency in residential buildings;*
- *energy efficiency projects in municipalities;*
- *monitoring energy savings; and*
- *Stats on CO2 emissions.*

Energy Efficiency Fund

There is significant progress in implementing the Energy Efficiency Fund. Kosovo established operational procedures to subsidise energy efficiency measures in the residential sector, including social housing.²⁷⁸ **Very good progress**

Power plants

Kosovo heavily relies on coal, with two highly unreliable and polluting lignite power plants producing over 90% of electricity. This worsened Kosovo’s existing challenges with air pollution, environmental degradation, and health issues. As such, it was recommended to focus on decommissioning the inactive sections of the Kosovo A thermal power plant. Efforts to enhance the environmental performance of the Kosovo B thermal power plant, with the goal of reducing dust and nitrogen oxide emissions to align with EU standards, have been postponed until 2024-2025.²⁷⁹ **No progress**

²⁷⁴ Energy Regulatory Office, Annual Report 2021, March 2022.

²⁷⁵ Energy Regulatory Office, Annual Report 2022, March 2023.

²⁷⁶ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, October 2022.

²⁷⁷ Ibid.

²⁷⁸ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 8 November 2023.

²⁷⁹ Ibid.

Energy efficiency in residential buildings

The energy efficiency fund has made some progress by investing in public buildings. However, there is still work to be done in improving energy efficiency in residential buildings and the private sector. Efforts are being increased to monitor and verify energy savings. The new energy strategy outlines specific indicators and targets to enhance energy efficiency in these areas.²⁸⁰ There is no data provided for specific investments in residential buildings.

Energy efficiency projects in municipalities

Thirteen municipalities drafted the Energy Efficiency Plan, whereas eight municipalities have not yet established such a plan. For the purpose of its implementation, 25 municipalities have initiated numerous projects, primarily in schools, Centers for Family Medical Care, and public facilities within the municipalities. Eight municipalities have not developed any projects.²⁸¹

For the reporting period, 8,798,507.20 EUR have been invested in energy efficiency at the municipal level, primarily focusing on implementing energy-efficient measures in public lighting. This amount covers the period from 2020 to 2022. However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, some projects could not be completed on schedule.²⁸² **Very good progress**

Monitoring energy savings

The Kosovo Efficient Energy Agency established the Platform for Monitoring Energy Saving in accordance with the Law on Energy Efficiency. This platform will be used, when possible, for calculating energy savings and reporting the progress on specific measures. The reports deriving from these calculations then are submitted to both the Government and the Secretariat of the Energy Community. Municipalities are also required to use the special software platform and/or data page for reporting, with the Monitoring and Verification Platform provided by the Kosovo Efficient Energy Agency.²⁸³ **Some progress**

Stats on CO2 emissions

Greenhouse gas emissions for the year 2021 were emitted as follows, 87% (or 9223 Gg CO₂ eq.) from the energy sector, 2% (or 178 Gg CO₂ eq.) from industrial processes and product manufacturing, 7% (or 746 Gg CO₂ eq.) from agriculture, forestry, and land use, and 4% (or 470 Gg CO₂ eq.) from waste. The total greenhouse gas emissions amounted to 10617 Gg CO₂ eq.

Emissions for the year 2022 will be assessed in 2024.²⁸⁴

Some progress was made in energy efficiency in 2022.

c) Renewable energy

The means of assessing renewable energy include:

- *investments;*
- *energy from renewable sources; and*
- *energy from alternative sources of energy.*

Investments

In the field of energy, Kosovo has achieved some level of preparation, making limited progress, particularly by increasing the share of renewable energy and investing in the energy sector.²⁸⁵

To meet the ambitious targets set by the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans, Kosovo must mobilise new investments in renewable energy sources. The completion of a National Energy and Climate Plan is crucial, as it will outline the 2030 renewable energy targets and establish cost-effective policies and

²⁸⁰ Ibid.

²⁸¹ Ministry of Local Government Administration, Report on the fulfilment of municipal obligations from the European Agenda for the period January-December 2022, 3 May 2023, at <https://mapl.rks-gov.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Shqip-Raporti-per-permbushjen-e-obligimeve-te-komunave-nga-Agjenda-Evr...21.02.2023.pdf>.

²⁸² Balkans Group interview with an official from the Ministry of Economy, Prishtina, November 2023.

²⁸³ Balkans Group interview with an official from the Ministry of Economy, Prishtina, November 2023.

²⁸⁴ Balkans Group interview with an official from the Ministry of Economy, Prishtina, November 2023.

²⁸⁵ Energy Community, Implementation at Indicators, at <https://www.energy-community.org/implementation/report/Kosovo.html>.

measures to achieve them. It is essential to finalise the law on renewable energy and the procedures for competitive bidding for renewable energy projects in the near future²⁸⁶ **Limited progress**

Energy from renewable sources

In 2021, Kosovo produced 437 GWh of renewable energy (hydro, wind and solar). In 2022, Kosovo produced 637 GWh.²⁸⁷ This represents an increase of 46% in renewable energy produced in 2022 compared to 2021. **Some progress**

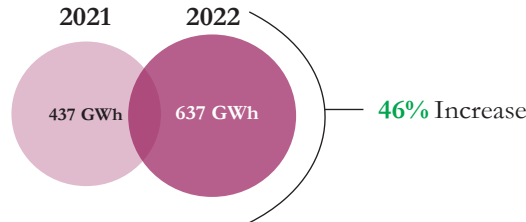


Figure 40. Production of renewable energy

Plans for Alternative Sources of Energy

The government drafted an ambitious energy strategy, aiming for an increased share in renewable energy sources. However, approval of the strategy has been delayed due to the ongoing energy crisis. It is necessary to align the strategy with the National Energy and Climate Plan. In addition, it needs to align its legal framework with EU Directives on emissions, as it currently falls short of Energy Community requirements for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. While the new energy strategy doesn't address gas infrastructure development, no investment decisions have been made due to uncertainties in gas supply options.²⁸⁸ **No progress**

Some progress was made in renewable energy in 2022.

d) Legal framework

The means of assessing the legal framework regarding energy include:

- *Updating Energy Strategy;*
- *Adjustment of energy tariffs; and*
- *Integrated National Energy and Climate Plan.*

Energy Strategy

The approval of the Energy Strategy for the period 2022-2031 was postponed in 2022 due to the ongoing energy crisis.²⁸⁹ **No progress**

Adjustment of energy tariffs

The plan for gradual adjustment of energy tariffs was not drafted in 2022, despite recommendations of the country report of 2021. The Energy Regulatory's Office increased electricity tariffs by 15.4%.²⁹⁰ The Basic Court and the Court of Appeal decided to postpone the execution of the decision.²⁹¹ However, the Supreme Court overturned the decision of the Basic Court of Pristina and deemed as unfounded the request of the Democratic Party of Kosovo. Subsequently, they initiated a request before the Constitutional Court, which is still pending.²⁹² Following the decision of the Supreme Court, no new decisions have been made on energy tariffs.²⁹³ **No progress**

²⁸⁶ Energy Regulatory Office, Annual Report 2022, March 2023.

²⁸⁷ Energy Regulatory Office, Annual Report 2021, March 2022 and Energy Regulatory Office, Annual Report 2022, March 2023.

²⁸⁸ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 8 November 2023.

²⁸⁹ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 12 October 2022.

²⁹⁰ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 8 November 2023.

²⁹¹ Energy Regulatory Office, Annual Report 2022, March 2023.

²⁹² Ibid.

²⁹³ Kallxo.com, No new decision has been made on energy tariffs, 28 January 2023, at <https://kallxo.com/krypometer/nuk-eshte-marre-vendim-i-ri-per-tarifat-e-energijise/>.

Integrated National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP)

The government has not adopted an integrated National Energy Climate Plan (NECP). Without the Law on Climate Change, there is no legal foundation for the NECP.²⁹⁴ **No progress**

No progress was made in the legal framework in 2022.

| Energy | No Progress | Limited Progress | Some Progress | Good Progress | Very Good Progress |
|-----------------------------|-------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Energy supply | | ✓ | | | |
| Energy efficiency | | | ✓ | | |
| Renewable energy | | | ✓ | | |
| Legal framework | ✓ | | | | |
| The Overall progress | | ✓ | | | |

Table 51. Overall progress for Energy

The overall progress in Energy is assessed as 'limited' in 2022.

2. Environment

To assess whether Kosovo has achieved progress in meeting the environmental criteria, the following sub-indicators were used:

- Air quality* - or improvements of air quality through the development of air quality plans, compliance with emission ceilings, real-time monitoring process, and ban on coal for heating;
- Water and land management* - or information regarding water supply level, drinking water, management efficiency of water resources, land quality, and water pollution;
- Waste management* - or information regarding the management of illegal dumpsites, landfill locations, and waste management plans at the local level;
- Forest management* - or data on deforestation and reforestation;
- Legal framework* - whether laws and strategies have been adopted and/or are being implemented.

²⁹⁴ International Monetary Fund, World Bank Assessment Letter for The Resilience and Sustainability Facility, May 2023, at <https://www.library.imf.org/view/journals/002/2023/200/article-A002-en.xml>.

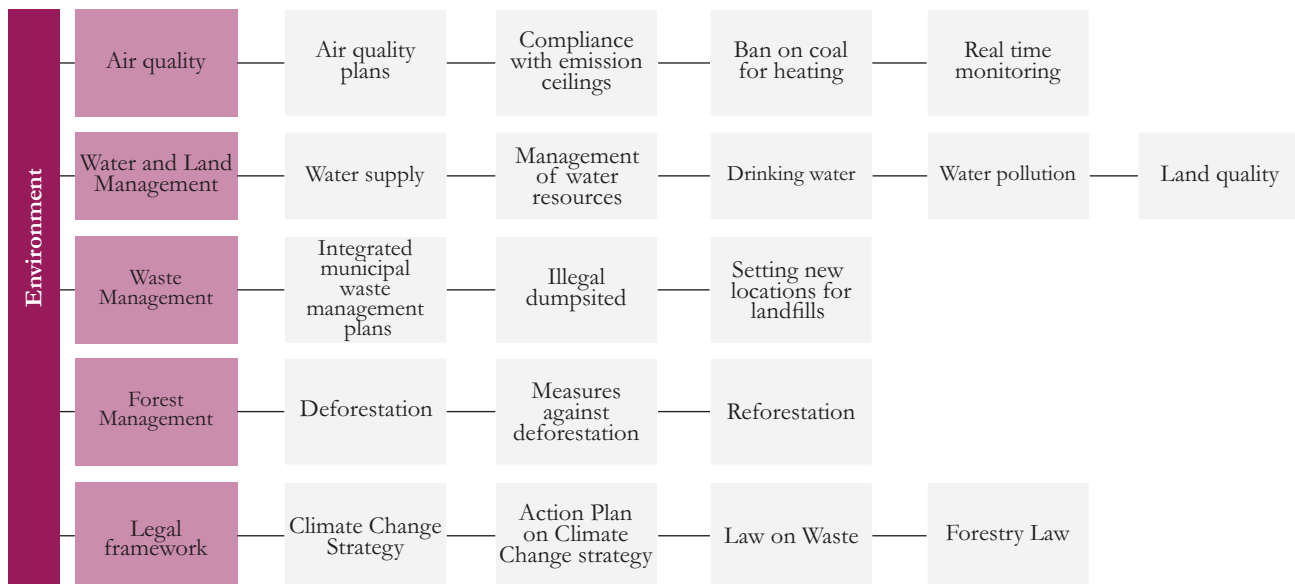


Figure 41. Environment and its sub-indicators

a) Air quality

The means of assessing air quality include:

- *air quality plans;*
- *compliance with emission ceiling;*
- *ban on coal for heating; and*
- *real-time monitoring.*

Air quality plans

The Air Quality Index places Kosovo at the 69th position out of 118 countries regarding air pollution.²⁹⁵ Persistent pollution remains a significant health threat. Despite completing a detailed identification of sources of air pollution, the immediate action to implement effective measures for remediation and control is lacking. Kosovo is currently not in compliance with the emission ceilings set forth in its national Emissions Reduction Plan, the adoption of which has been delayed.²⁹⁶ **No progress**

Compliance with emission ceiling

Prishtina and other cities already have among the worst air quality in Europe, with concentrations of PM2.5 exceeding World Health Organisation guidelines throughout the year.²⁹⁷ In 2022, all WB6 countries implementing NERPs experienced a persistent breach of the SO₂ emission ceiling, with Kosovo witnessing a growth in absolute emissions. This escalation was exacerbated by the gradual reduction of the ceilings.²⁹⁸

The total NO_x emissions in Kosovo demonstrated an increasing trend in absolute emissions, leading to non-compliance with the prescribed NO_x emission ceilings. The challenge is expected to become bigger in the future as NO_x ceilings are set to gradually decrease by approximately 50% between 2018 and 2023. In addition, the breach of dust ceiling limits continued in Kosovo, where despite a minor reported decrease, emissions exceeded the limit by more than six times. This is attributed to the decreasing ceiling, posing a significant obstacle to achieving compliance in the years to come.²⁹⁹ **No progress**

²⁹⁵ Kosovo Energy, As temperatures drop, air quality in Kosovo continues to decline, November 2022 at <https://kosovo.energy/me-uljen-e-temperaturave-cilesia-e-ajrit-ne-kosove-po-vazhdon-te-bie/>

²⁹⁶ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 8 November 2023.

²⁹⁷ IQAir, Air quality in Kosovo at, <https://www.iqair.com/kosovo>.

²⁹⁸ Energy Community, CBAM-Readiness Tracker, June 2023.

²⁹⁹ Ibid.

Ban on coal for heating

Coal-fired plants play a crucial role in generating electricity in Kosovo. Two outdated, unreliable, and highly polluting lignite power plants contribute to over 90% of the electricity production, and the government intends to refurbish them. Currently, renewable energy sources make up slightly over 5% of the electricity supply.³⁰⁰ The existing measures intended to enforce the prohibition on coal usage for heating are currently constrained and lack effectiveness.³⁰¹ **No progress**

Real-time monitoring

Monitoring air quality in real-time proves to be efficient and is accessible through the Air Quality Portal.³⁰² **Very good progress**

Limited progress was made in air quality in 2022.

b) Water and land management

The means of assessing water and land management include:

- *water supply;*
- *management of water resources;*
- *drinking water;*
- *water pollution; and*
- *land quality.*

Water supply

In 2021, the supply of households with drinking water stood at 156.4 million m³/year.³⁰³ In 2022, the supply was 156.8 million m³/year.³⁰⁴ This represents an increase of 0.25%. **Limited progress**

| Year | 2021 | 2022 |
|--------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Water supply | 156.4 mil m ³ /year | 156.8 mil m ³ /year |
| Increase (%) | 0.25% | |

Table 52. Water supply

Management of water resources

The hydrometric network monitors the amount of water through a number of measuring stations along the rivers. In 2021, the trend of the average annual water level was 1926 (cm) which compared to 2022 (when the water level was 1805 cm) is a negative trend.³⁰⁵ This represents a 6.3% decrease in the amount of water in 2022. **No progress**

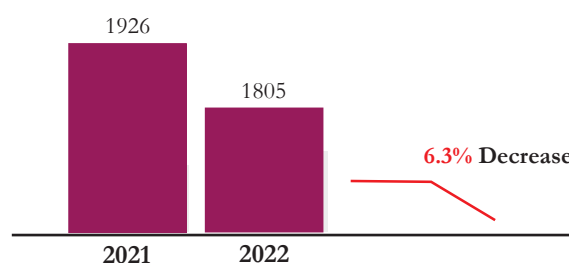


Table 83. Management of water resources

³⁰⁰ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 8 November 2023.

³⁰¹ Ibid.

³⁰² IQ Air, Air Quality in Kosovo, at <https://www.iqair.com/kosovo>.

³⁰³ Water service Regulatory Authority, Annual Performance Report for Water Service Providers in Kosovo 2021, August 2022.

³⁰⁴ Water service Regulatory Authority, Annual Performance Report for Water Service Providers in Kosovo 2021, September 2023.

³⁰⁵ Balkans Group interview with an officer from Kosovo Environmental Protection Agency, November 2023.

Drinking water

In 2021, about 96.88% of the population in Kosovo was supplied with water through the public system, while 3.12% of the population did not have access.³⁰⁶

The increase of access from the previous year is only 2.18%, however 99% already have access to drinking which reflects a very good progress.³⁰⁷ **Very good progress**

| Year | 2021 | 2022 |
|---|--------|------|
| Access to drinking water (% population) | 96.88% | 99% |
| Increase (%) | 2.18% | |

Table 53. Access to drinking water

Water pollution

Untreated sewage and discharge continue to be the main contributors to water and river pollution. While the development of wastewater treatment plants in larger cities is developing, the identification of agglomerations and sensitive areas in accordance with the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive falls short.³⁰⁸

In all 38 municipalities, there are only three small wastewater treatment plants, each with a capacity below 50 thousand inhabitants.³⁰⁹ Regional Water Company distributed 156.8 million m³ of water in the water supply system in 2022 with approximately 75% of it being released untreated into rivers, causing significant environmental and health damage.³¹⁰ Last year, hundreds in the Deçan area were poisoned due to water contamination, highlighting a lack of comprehensive assessments of health issues from polluted water nationwide.³¹¹ **No progress**

Land quality

The monitoring of lands, as for the environmental aspects of the pollution, is under the responsibility of the Hydrometeorological Institute.³¹² In 2022, very good progress The Action Plan for Protection of Agricultural Land to address the steady loss and degradation of farmland has not yet been adopted. This activity involves the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning and Infrastructure and local authorities. Therefore, progress on consolidating and protecting land is insufficient.³¹³ **No progress**

Limited progress was made in water and land management in 2022.

c) Waste management

The means of assessing waste management include:

- *integrated municipal waste management plans;*
- *illegal dumpsites; and*
- *setting up new locations for landfills.*

Integrated municipal waste management plans (MWMPs)

Some progress was reported in 2022 in adopting modern integrated municipal waste management plans in some municipalities.³¹⁴ Out of 38 municipalities, 18 have initiated home-composting systems, and some

³⁰⁶ KAS, Water Statistics in Kosovo 2020-2021, at <https://ask.rks-gov.net/media/6987/statistikat-e-ujrave-2020-2021.pdf>.

³⁰⁷ Balkans Group interview with an officer from Kosovo Environmental Protection Agency, November 2023.

³⁰⁸ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 8 November 2023.

³⁰⁹ Kallxo.com, Kosovo, the country of sewage water export, 18 May 2022, at <https://kallxo.com/gjate/kosova-vendi-i-eksportit-te-ujrave-te-kanalizimeve/>.

³¹⁰ Water Services Regulatory Authority, Annual Report of Performance of Regional Water Companies in Kosovo - 2022, September 2023, at <https://www.arru-rks.org/assets/cms/uploads/files/Publikimet/raportet%20vjetore%20te%20performances/KRU-Raporti%20Vjetor%20i%20Peformances%202022%20v02.pdf>. <https://www.arru-rks.org/assets/cms/uploads/files/Publikimet/raportet%20vjetore%20te%20performances/KRU-Raporti%20Vjetor%20i%20Peformances%202022%20v02.pdf>.

³¹¹ Kallxo.com, Kosovo, the country of sewage water export, 18 May 2022, at <https://kallxo.com/gjate/kosova-vendi-i-eksportit-te-ujrave-te-kanalizimeve/>.

³¹² Annual report on the environment 2020, at <https://ammk-rks.net/assets/cms/uploads/files/Dokumente%202022/Shqip%20WEB.pdf>.

³¹³ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 8 November 2023.

³¹⁴ Ibid.

municipalities have implemented pilot measures for the separation of fractionous collection waste and the reduction of organic waste.³¹⁵ **Some progress**

| Year | 2022 |
|--------------------------------|-------|
| Total municipalities | 38 |
| MWMPs adopted (municipalities) | 18 |
| Percentage (%) | 47.3% |

Table 54. Municipal waste management plans

Illegal dumpsites

From 1,189 in 2021, the number of illegal dumpsites decreased to 763 in 2022.³¹⁶ This represents a decrease of 36%. **Some progress**

| Year | 2021 | 2022 |
|-------------------|-------|------|
| Illegal dumpsites | 1,189 | 763 |
| Decrease (%) | 36% | |

Table 55. Access to drinking water

Setting up new locations for landfills

The government has chosen locations for the new landfill for Pristina regional waste management and hazardous waste storage. However, it still needs to carry out the procedures for environmental and social impact assessments.³¹⁷ **No progress**

Limited progress was made in waste management in 2022.

d) Forest management

The means of assessing forest management include:

- *deforestation*
- *measures against deforestation; and*
- *reforestation.*

Deforestation

Deforestation in Kosovo is prohibited by law. Yet, illegal actions, i.e., illegal cutting of forests takes place and remains a serious concern.³¹⁸

In 2021, Kosovo lost 520ha (0.14%) of tree cover, whereas in 2022, Kosovo lost 785 ha (0.21%).³¹⁹ This represents an increase of 51% in tree cover loss. **No progress**

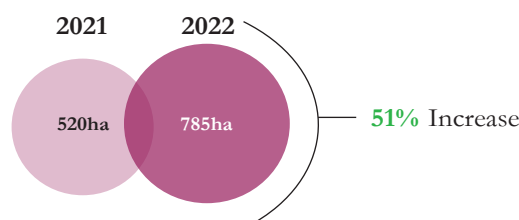


Figure 43. Tree cover loss

³¹⁵ Ibid.

³¹⁶ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 8 November 2023.

³¹⁷ Balkans Group interview with an official from the Kosovo Environmental Protection Agency, Prishtina, November 2022.

³¹⁸ Law No. 2003/3 on Forests in Kosovo, article 3, point 3.7 at <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=2566>; Balkans Group interview with an official from the Kosovo Forest Agency, Prishtina, November 2022.

³¹⁹ Global Forest Watch, Kosovo, at <https://bit.ly/3XoEYgn>.

Measures against deforestation

10 to 15 percent of the total forest volume got deforested in compliance with the existing legislation.³²⁰ Consequently, deforestation remains an issue of serious concern.³²¹ Additionally the phenomenon of illegal logging contributes to the damage of Kosovo's forests, causing difficulty in repairing the resulting damage, which could endure for decades.³²² **No progress**

Reforestation

In 2021, 309.30 hectares were reforested while in 2022, 111 hectares were deforested.³²³ This marks a decrease of 64% in reforestation in 2022. **No progress**

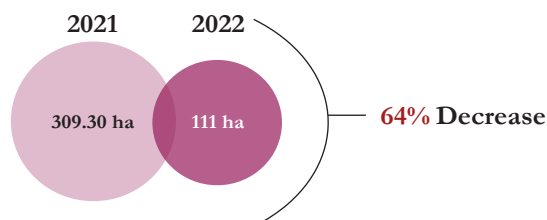


Figure 44. Reforestation

No progress was made in forest management in 2022.

e) Legal framework

The means of assessing the legal framework regarding the environment include:

- *Implementation of the Climate Change Strategy;*
- *Action Plan on Climate Change Strategy; and*
- *Harmonisation of Law on Waste; and*
- *Forestry Law.*

Climate Change Strategy

The implementation of the 2019-2028 Climate Change Strategy is facing constraints. Kosovo has not adopted the Climate Change Law, despite the EU recommending the adoption of the National Energy and Climate Plan by the end of June 2024.³²⁴ **No progress**

Action Plan on Climate Change Strategy

A new Action Plan of the Climate Change Strategy 2021-2023 has not been drafted.³²⁵ **No progress**

Harmonisation of Law on Waste

In 2022, the Assembly adopted the Law on Waste.³²⁶ The law was drafted in line with the Waste Framework Directive.³²⁷ **Very good progress**

320 Radio Free Europe, Illegal logging damages Kosovo's forests, October 2022 at <https://www.evropaelire.org/a/prerja-ilegale-e-pyjeve-/32075708.html>.

321 European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 8 November 2023.

322 Radio Free Europe, Illegal logging damages Kosovo's forests, October 2022 at <https://www.evropaelire.org/a/prerja-ilegale-e-pyjeve-/32075708.html>.

323 Green Report 2022, and Balkans Group interview with an official from the Kosovo Forest Agency, Prishtina, November 2023.

324 European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 8 November 2023.

325 Ibid.

326 Assembly of Kosovo, Law no. 08/L-071 on the amendment and completion of Law no. 04/L-060 on Waste, at <https://www.kuvendikosoves.org/eng/projektligjet-dhe-ligjet/draftlawopen/?draftlaw=309>.

327 European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 8 November 2023.

Forestry Law

The Forest Strategy was not adopted in 2022, but the Assembly received a proposal for the draft-law on Forestry in March of the same year. The law passed its first review in June, but it was not adopted.³²⁸ **No progress**

Limited progress was made in the legal framework in 2022.

| Environment | No Progress | Limited Progress | Some Progress | Good Progress | Very Good Progress |
|-----------------------------|-------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Air quality | | ✓ | | | |
| Water and land management | | ✓ | | | |
| Waste management | | ✓ | | | |
| Forest management | ✓ | | | | |
| Legal framework | | ✓ | | | |
| The Overall progress | | ✓ | | | |

Table 56. The overall progress for Environment

The overall progress in Sustainable Development is assessed as 'limited' in 2022.

³²⁸ Ibid and See Assembly of Kosovo, at <https://www.kuvendikosoves.org/shq/projektligjet-dhe-ligjet/>.



Dimension VI

EDUCATION

Summary and Analysis

The EU is dedicated to developing quality education according to Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU).

Education focuses on fulfilling key requirements in relation to the improvement of education quality at all levels, the reformation of vocational education, and development of training and policies that lead to higher employment, the acquisition of skills, and higher social inclusion.³²⁹ Education criteria are placed under Block III: European Standards - Approximation of Kosovo's Legislation with the EU Acquis in the NPISAA.

In addition, education is also placed under Pillar III: Employment, Education, and Health within ERA II. It focuses on improving the quality of the education sector, ensuring transparency in education system governance, and increasing access to education.³³⁰

To assess whether Kosovo has achieved progress in meeting the education criteria, one indicator is used:

1. Educational Provision

This indicator uses the following sub-indicators to measure progress in this sector:

- Spending on education*- or information on public and private education spending, expenditure per student, spending on research and infrastructure;
- Access to education*- or data on student enrolment, graduation rate, drop-out of girls and RAE students, and the number of preschools;
- Governance and quality of education*- or improvements in textbooks and curricula, the appointment of school directories process, and membership of KAA in ENQA;
- Alignment with the labour market*- or information on the alignment of curricula and vocational education and training programs with the labour market.

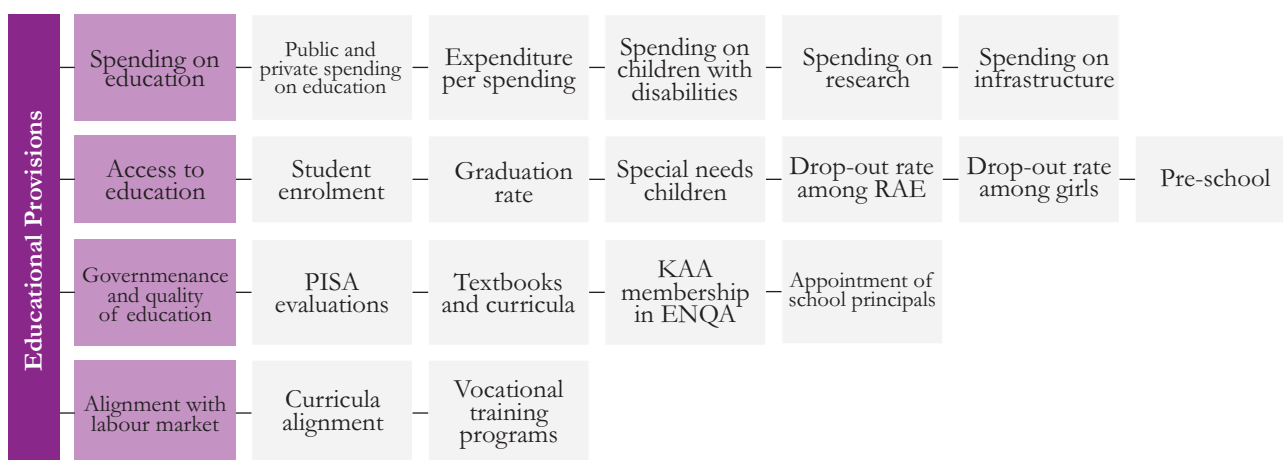


Figure 45. Education and its sub-indicators

High-quality statistical data are vital for monitoring progress and making informed decisions in higher education. However, challenges in collecting, processing, publishing, and using this data include issues related to policy, legislation, organisation, technical and human capacities, and inter-agency coordination.³³¹ Although MESTI records the number of students, the lack of classified data according to age cohorts and vulnerable groups, creates difficulties in clearly disaggregating participation rates in education.³³²

329 Government of Kosovo, National Programme for Implementation of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (NPISAA), 2016, at https://kryeministri.rks-gov.net/repository/docs/National_Programme_for_Implementation_of_the_Stabilisation_and_Association_Agreement.pdf.

330 Kosovo-European Reform Agenda (ERA) II, 2020.

331 Kosova Education Center, Challenges with Statistical Data and Indicators on Higher Education in Kosovo, May 2023 at <http://kec-ks.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Raport-Sfida-e-te-dheneve-statistikore-dhe-treguesve-per-arsimin-e-larte-ne-Kosove-ENG.pdf>

332 Regional Cooperation Council, Performance of Western Balkan Economies Regarding the European Pillar of Social Rights 2021 review on Kosovo*, 2021, at <https://www.esap.online/download/docs/ESAP-Social-Rights-Pillar-Report-Kosovo.pdf/f72dc00af90c0fbc60354508ce1c3931.pdf>.

a) Spending on Education

The means of assessing spending on education include:

- *public and private spending on education;*
- *expenditures per student;*
- *spending on children with disabilities;*
- *spending on research; and*
- *spending on infrastructure and investment.*

Public and private spending on education

In 2021, the government allocated EUR 65,116,454 to education which was 3.5% of the entire budget of EUR 1,879,947,397.³³³

In 2022, Kosovo allocated EUR 72,021,831 to education, which accounts for 3.43% of the whole budget of EUR 1,944,092,398.³³⁴ This represents a decrease from last year. **No progress**

| Year | 2021 | 2022 |
|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Spending on education | 65,116,454 EUR | 72,021,831 EUR |
| Total budget | 1,879,947,397 EUR | 1,944,092,398 EUR |
| Ratio | 0.028 | 0.026 |
| Decrease (%) | | 6.6% |

Table 57. Spending on education

Expenditures per student

No data was provided by the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation.

Spending on children with disabilities

In 2021, the spending on children with disabilities was EUR 1,707,150.46, while in 2022, the spending was EUR 1,748,061.42.³³⁵ This marks an increase of 2.4% spending in 2022. **Limited progress**

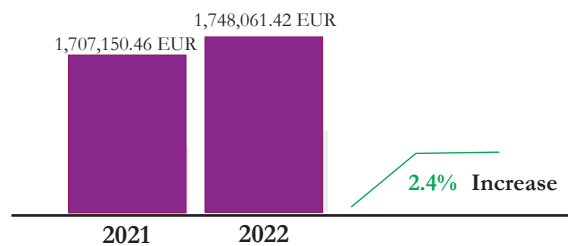


Figure 46. Spending on children with disabilities

Spending on research

In 2021, the spending on research was EUR 61,230. In 2022 the spending on research was EUR 182,086. Kosovo scores among the lowest in the Western Balkan region for research and innovation. The allocation for research and development, which stands at 0.1% of GDP, falls significantly short of the 0.7% of GDP mandated by law (in contrast to the EU average of 2.2%), especially concerning business innovation. However, the Kosovo National Science Council developed the National Science Programme as a key strategic document for science and research. Kosovo achieved full associated membership in the Horizon Europe program after successful negotiations with the EU, although improvements are needed in accessing grants.³³⁶ **Very good progress**

333 Ministry of Finance, Labour and Transfers, Budget Circular 2021/02, at <https://mfpt.rks-gov.net/Buxheti/Page/326>.

334 Ministry of Finance, Labour and Transfers, Budget Circular 2022/02, at <https://mfpt.rks-gov.net/Buxheti/Page/326>.

335 Balkans Group interview with an official from the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, Prishtina, December 2023.

336 MESTI, Kosovo Education Strategic Plan (KESP), at <https://www.google.com/search?client=safari&rls=en&q=kosovo+education+stratic+plan&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8>.

Spending on infrastructure and investment

In 2021, the spending on infrastructure and investment such as gymnastic classes, laboratory equipment, and different material equipment was EUR 1,991,834.50, while in 2022 it reached EUR 3,789,836.20.³³⁷ This represents an increase of 90.3%. **Very good progress**

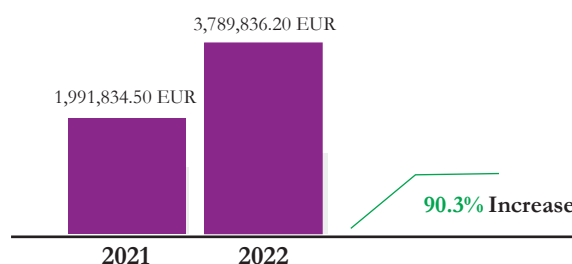


Figure 47. Spending on infrastructure and investment

Some progress was made in spending on education in 2022.

b) Access to Education

The means of assessing access to education include:

- *student enrolment;*
- *graduation rate;*
- *special needs children;*
- *drop-out rate among RAE;*
- *drop-out rate among girls; and*
- *pre-school.*

Student enrollment

In the 2020/21 academic year, 21,047 (or 5.9%) students enrolled in higher education.³³⁸ In the 2021/22 academic year, 23,488 were enrolled in higher education³³⁹

This represents a decrease of 8.88% in the number of students enrolled in higher education in 2022. **No progress**

| Year | 2020/21 | 2021/22 |
|---------------------------------------|---------|---------|
| Students enrolled in higher education | 25,685 | 23,488 |
| Decrease (%) | 8.55% | |

Table 58. Student enrolment in higher education

Graduation rate

13,139 students graduated (BA level, master's level and PhD) in the 2020/2021 academic year.³⁴⁰ Whereas, in the academic year of 2021/2022, there are 14,590 graduate students in graduate and post-graduate programmes (BA, MAs and PhD), reflecting an 16.4% increase from the previous year.³⁴¹ **Limited progress**

³³⁷ Balkans Group interview with an official from the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, Prishtina, November 2023.

³³⁸ Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, Kosovo Education Statistics 2020-2021, June 2021, at <https://askapi.rks-gov.net/Custom/1d0b109e-9749-4560-834f-78e847507ed1.pdf>.

³³⁹ Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, Kosovo Education Statistics 2021-2022, June 2022, at <https://askapi.rks-gov.net/Custom/7c4b57fd-894a-45cd-865b-bca2780e1ea3.pdf>.

³⁴⁰ Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, Kosovo Education Statistics 2020-2021, June 2021, at <https://askapi.rks-gov.net/Custom/1d0b109e-9749-4560-834f-78e847507ed1.pdf>.

³⁴¹ Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, Kosovo Education Statistics 2021-2022, June 2022, at <https://askapi.rks-gov.net/Custom/7c4b57fd-894a-45cd-865b-bca2780e1ea3.pdf>.

| Year | 2020/21 | 2021/22 |
|---------------------------------|---------|---------|
| Total students | 430,811 | 410,065 |
| Student graduates (Ba, Ma, PhD) | 13,139 | 14,590 |
| Ratio | 3.04% | 3.55% |
| Increase (%) | 16.47% | |

Table 59. Graduation rates

Special needs children

In 2021, there were 55 supporting teachers and 86 assistants.³⁴² In 2022, there were 69 assistants for special needs children.³⁴³ **No progress**

Drop-out rate among RAE

In 2021 53 pupils from the RAE community left school.³⁴⁴ This number in 2022 increased to 86.³⁴⁵ **No progress**

| Year | 2020/21 | 2021/22 |
|--------------------|---------|---------|
| Number of dropouts | 53 | 86 |
| Increase(%) | 62.3% | |

Table 60. Drop-out rates among RAE

Drop-out rate among girls

Roma and Ashkali children experience a higher dropout rate, although the statistics are unreliable for this issue.³⁴⁶

In the 2020/2021 academic year, 0.04% of girls dropped primary education, 0.05% secondary education and 0.5% tertiary education.³⁴⁷ 0.04% of girls dropped primary, and secondary education and 0.71% dropped tertiary education in the academic year 2021/2022.³⁴⁸ **No progress**

| Year | 2020/21 | 2021/22 |
|---------------------------|---------|---------|
| Drop-out rate among girls | 0.59% | 0.79% |
| Increase | 33.4% | |

Table 61. Drop-out rated among girls

Pre-school

In the academic year 2020/2021, 49 preschool institutions were in Kosovo.³⁴⁹ There were no new preschool institutions in 2021/2022.³⁵⁰ **No progress**

No progress was made in access to education in 2022.

342 KEC, Evaluation of the Implementation of Kosovo Education Strategic Plan 2017-2021 Insufficient Achievement, May 2021, at <http://kec-ks.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Evaluation-of-the-Implementation-of-KESP-2017-2021.pdf>.

343 Balkans Group interview with an official from the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, Prishtina, November 2023.

344 Balkans Group interview with an official from the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, Prishtina, November 2022.

345 Balkans Group interview with an official from the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, Prishtina, November 2023.

346 European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 8 November 2023.

347 Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Statistical Notes: data on pre-university education, 2021/22, at <https://masht.rks-gov.net/uploads/2022/01/statistical-notes-2021-22-pre-university-education.pdf>. and Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Statistical Notes: data on pre-university education, 2019/20, at <https://masht.rks-gov.net/uploads/2020/02/shenime-statistikore-2019-2020-arsimi-parauniversitar-2.pdf>.

348 Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, Annual Statistical Report with Education Indicators, 2022 at <https://masht.rks-gov.net/raport-vjetor-statistikor-me-tregues-arsimore-2/>.

349 Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Statistical Notes: data on pre-university education, 2021/22, at <https://masht.rks-gov.net/uploads/2022/01/statistical-notes-2021-22-pre-university-education.pdf>.

350 TV21, In Kosovo, there are only 49 public preschool institutions, but a larger number of private ones, 04 November 2022 at <https://rtv21.tv/ne-kosove-vetem-49-cerdhe-publike-numer-me-i-madh-i-cerdheve-private/>.

c) Governance and quality of education

The means of assessing the governance and quality of education include:

- *PISA evaluations;*
- *textbooks and curricula;*
- *KAA membership in ENQA; and*
- *appointment of school principals.*

PISA evaluations

PISA 2022 results show that Kosovo is at the 74th position in math, and in reading at the 76th. In both subjects, there was a decrease in performance by 11 points compared to the PISA evaluation in 2018.³⁵¹ Additionally, in science, Kosovo holds the 77th position, experiencing an eight-point drop.³⁵² **No progress**

Textbooks and curricula

The lack of suitable textbooks, teaching materials, and sustainable professional development schemes for teachers continues to hinder reforms.³⁵³ The draft law on textbooks, which aims at improving their quality, has been under review for four consecutive years but has never presented to the Assembly of Kosovo for approval.³⁵⁴ **No progress**

KAA membership in ENQA

In September 2022, the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA) achieved affiliated member status with the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA).³⁵⁵ **Very good progress**

Appointment of school principals

The recruitment of school principals has become more merit-based yet continues to face challenges stemming from municipal government influences, political interference, and the lack of educational policies for director careers.³⁵⁶ **No progress**

Limited progress was made in governance and quality of education in 2022.

d) Alignment with the labour market

The means of assessing the alignment with the labour market include:

- *curricula alignment; and*
- *vocational training.*

Curricula alignment

The present VET curriculum lacks systematic delivery of integrated work-based learning, and the current subject-based curricula do not prioritise the development of vocational skills. Schools generally lack the necessary conditions, teacher skills, equipment, materials, and structured cooperation with businesses to foster practical skills in learners.³⁵⁷ **No progress**

Vocational training

The current VET curriculum does not systematically deliver work-based learning, and the subject-based

351 OECD.org, PISA 2022 results, at https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/view/?ref=1235_1235421-gumq51fbgo&title=PISA-2022-Results-Volume-I.

352 Ibid.

353 Ibid.

354 Gazeta Blic, No more textbooks from publishing houses, the new law will favour the authors at, <https://gazetablic.com/ska-me-tekste-shkollore-te-shtepive-botuese-ligji-i-ri-do-ti-favorizojte-autoret/>.

355 European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 8 November 2023.

356 Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, Education Strategy 2022-2026, at <https://masht.rks-gov.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/03-Strategjia-e-Arsimit-2022-2026-Alb-Web.pdf>.

357 European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 8 November 2023.

curricula currently in use are not oriented towards developing vocational skills.³⁵⁸ Over half of upper secondary students opt for vocational education and training (VET), often as a second choice for those unable to join gymnasiums due to the lack of entry criteria in VET schools. In the 2021/2022 academic year, 37,585 students enrolled in vocational education schools, compared to 33,265 in gymnasiums out of a total of 70,850 upper secondary students.³⁵⁹ **No progress**

No progress was made in alignment with the labour market in 2022.

| Educational provision | No Progress | Limited Progress | Some Progress | Good Progress | Very Good Progress |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Spending in education | | | ✓ | | |
| Access to education | ✓ | | | | |
| Governance and quality of education | | ✓ | | | |
| Alignment with the labour market | ✓ | | | | |
| The Overall progress | | ✓ | | | |

Table 62. The overall progress for Education

The overall progress in Education is assessed as 'limited' in 2022.

³⁵⁸ Ibid.

³⁵⁹ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 12 October 2022.



Dimension VII

HEALTH

Summary and Analysis

The EU is committed to improving health based on Article 168 of TFEU. Public Health focuses on achieving shared objectives, generating economies of scale, pooling resources, and tackling common challenges such as pandemics, antimicrobial resistance, chronic diseases or the impact of increased life expectancies on healthcare systems.³⁶⁰ Health is placed under Block III: European Standards - Approximation of Kosovo's Legislation with the EU Acquis in the NPISAA. Under SAA, Kosovo seeks to fulfil the following requirements: health improvements and prevention of diseases, the establishment of well-functioning administrative structures, protection of patient rights, improvements in health care and safety, promotion of healthy living, and so on.³⁶¹

In addition, health is also placed under Pillar III: Employment, Education, and Health, within the ERA II. Specifically, the focus is on strengthening key health system functions by drafting the new sectoral health strategy and implementing the general health insurance policy.³⁶²

To assess whether Kosovo has achieved progress in meeting the health criteria, only one indicator is used:

1. Public Health

This indicator uses the following sub-indicators to measure the progress in this sector:

- Access to healthcare*- or information on the establishment of a universal healthcare scheme, the functioning of a public health information system, health expenditures, and the practising physicians per people;
- Quality of healthcare*- or information regarding patient satisfaction and corruption level in the healthcare system;
- COVID-19 management*- or data on vaccination and healthcare capacities;
- Infrastructure*- or information on personnel and number of beds;
- Legal framework*- whether laws and strategies have been adopted and/or are being implemented.

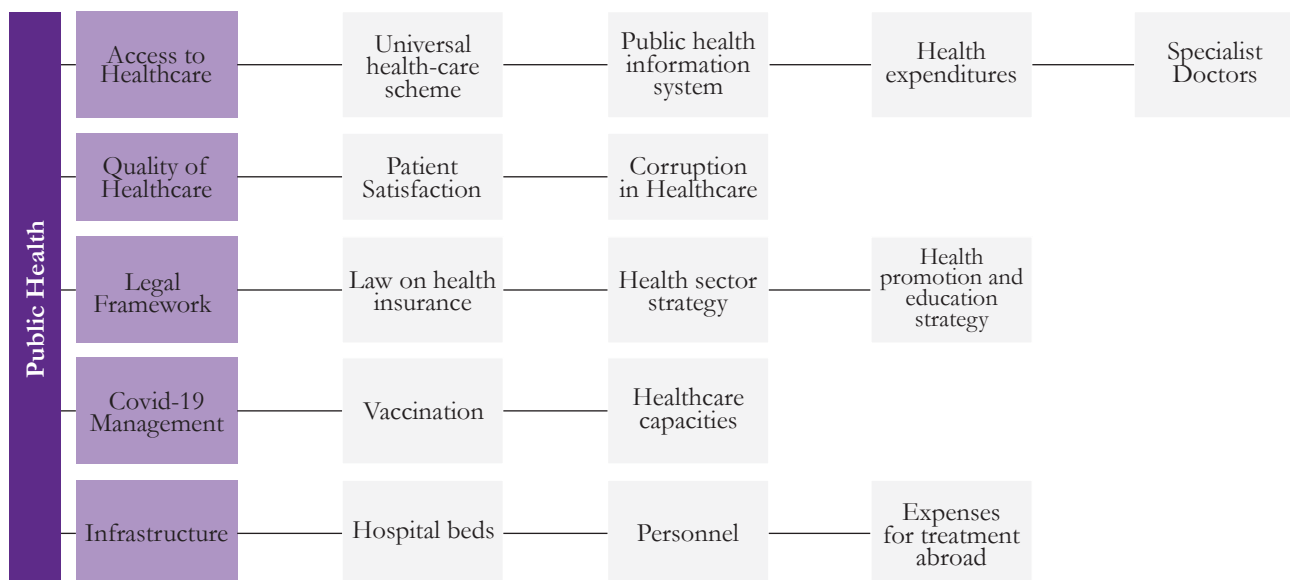


Figure 48. Public health and its sub-indicators

³⁶⁰ European Commission, Public Health, at https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/public-health_en.

³⁶¹ Government of Kosovo, National Programme for Implementation of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (NPISAA), 2016, at [National_Programme_for_Implementation_of_the_Stabilisation_and_Association_Agreement.pdf](#) (rks-gov.net).

³⁶² Kosovo-European Reform Agenda (ERA) II, 2020.

a) Access to healthcare

The means of assessing access to healthcare include:

- *universal healthcare scheme;*
- *public health information system;*
- *health expenditures; and*
- *the number of specialist doctors.*

Universal healthcare scheme

The government has not introduced the Universal Healthcare Scheme yet. The Law on Health Insurance (2013/04-L-249) is still applicable.³⁶³ The continuous postponement of the introduction of the universal health insurance scheme remains a serious issue and out-of-pocket payments are still very high.³⁶⁴ **No progress**

Public health information system

No progress has been made in implementing a universal health coverage scheme, and the public health information system remains non-functional.³⁶⁵

Kosovo's e-health system, based on European health indicators, facilitates virtual communication between users and general practitioners. It records patient data but is not universally adopted by health institutions. Additional functionalities, like pathology and radiology, are still pending.³⁶⁶ **No progress**

Health expenditures

Kosovo's total budget for 2022 allocated 9.5% to health, reflecting a 17.3% decrease compared to 2021.³⁶⁷ In 2021, health expenditure constituted 3.7% of GDP, while no data is available for 2022.³⁶⁸

Specialist doctors

In 2021, from 3275 specialist doctors, 3279 were in public hospitals and 446 in private hospitals.³⁶⁹ In 2022 the number of specialist doctors in public hospitals was 3205 and in private hospitals 446, or in total 3651.³⁷⁰ This represents a decrease of 2% in the year of 2022. **No progress**

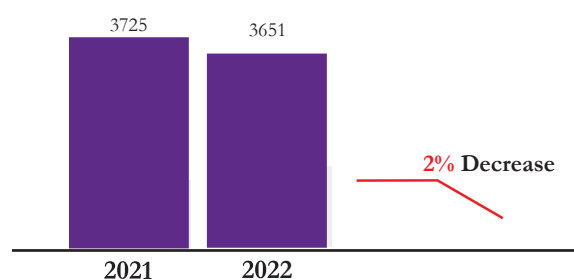


Table 96. Number of specialist doctors in public and private hospitals

No progress was made in access to healthcare in 2022.

363 See State Portal, at <https://www.rks-gov.net/AL/f263/shendetesia/sigurimet-shendetesore>.

364 European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 8 November 2023.

365 European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 12 October 2022.

366 European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 8 November 2023.

367 Kosovo Agency of Statistics, Health Statistics 2021, at <https://www.suharekaonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/statistikat-e-shendetesise-2021.pdf>.

368 Office of the Prime Minister - Office of Good Governance, National Accounts - Health 2021 Report, at <https://konsultimet.rks-gov.net/viewConsult.php?ConsultationID=41693>.

369 Kosovo Agency of Statistics, Health Statistics 2021 at <https://www.suharekaonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/statistikat-e-shendetesise-2021.pdf>.

370 Kosovo Agency of Statistics, Health Statistics 2022 at <https://askapi.rks-gov.net/Custom/d96bb22b-6b14-420c-a4e0-097928f283f0.pdf>. Note: The statistical data includes the number of both doctors and dentists, in public and private sector.

b) Quality of healthcare

The means of assessing the quality of healthcare include:

- *patient satisfaction; and*
- *corruption in healthcare.*

Patient satisfaction

In 2021, health care satisfaction was rated at 2.7 (on a scale from 1 to 5).³⁷¹ In 2022, health care satisfaction is rated higher, at 3.3 on the same scale.³⁷² This shows an increase in satisfaction for 22.2% in the year of 2022. **Limited progress**

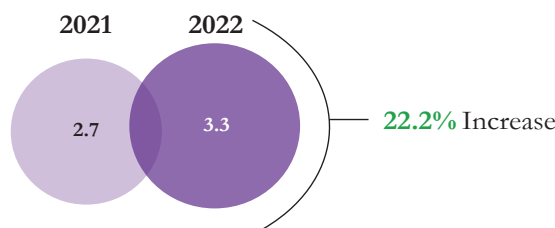


Table 103. Satisfaction in healthcare services

Corruption in healthcare

In 2021, 71.7% of respondents believed that healthcare was affected by corruption.³⁷³ There is no available data for 2022.

No progress was made in the quality of healthcare in 2022.

c) COVID-19 measures

The means of assessing COVID-19 measures include:

- *vaccination; and*
- *healthcare capacities.*

Vaccination

In 2022, 162,379 doses of COVID-19 were administered.³⁷⁴

The data in 2021 and those in 2022 were reported in different units, hence progress is unmeasurable.

Healthcare capacities

In 2022, the Ministry of Health took several actions to enhance health capacities, such as strengthening the cold chain for vaccine storage and inaugurating the new Vaccine Warehouse at Hospital and university Clinical Service of Kosova (HUSCK); purchased 5 ambulances for Primary Health Care; provided 675 hospital beds to Universal Clinic Center of Kosovo (UCCK) clinics and general hospitals through the JICA grant; activated the Pediatric Surgical Hospital at UCCK, as a result of a donation from the UAE of 22 million euros for Kosovo's Health Sector; and supplied equipment for acute emergency services across 34 municipalities. **Very good progress**

Very good progress was made in COVID-19 measures in 2022.

³⁷¹ Regional Cooperation Council, Balkan Barometer 2021, at <https://www.rcc.int/balkanbarometer/publications>.

³⁷² Regional Cooperation Council, Balkan Barometer 2022, at <https://www.rcc.int/balkanbarometer/publications>.

³⁷³ Ibid.

³⁷⁴ Ministry of Health, Yearly Report 2022, February 2023.

d) Infrastructure

The means of assessing the healthcare infrastructure include:

- *hospital beds;*
- *personnel; and*
- *expenses for treatment abroad.*

Hospital beds

In 2021, healthcare institutions had 4421 beds, whereas, in 2022, they had 4427 beds.³⁷⁵ This represents a slight increase of 0.5% in hospital beds. **Limited progress**

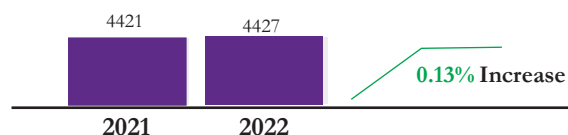


Figure 51. The number of hospital beds

Personnel

In 2021, 14318 was the number of personnel in all levels of health care.³⁷⁶ In 2022, this number was 16062.³⁷⁷ This marks an increase of 12.1% in personnel in 2022. **Limited progress**

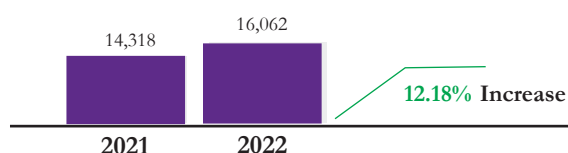


Figure 52. The number of health personnel

Expenses for treatment abroad

In 2021, EUR 9,400,993.08 EUR were spent on Subsidies for Medical Treatment Outside Public Health Institutions, while in 2022, EUR 5,582,350.00 were spent, which is 40.62% less than in 2021.³⁷⁸ **Some progress**

| Year | 2021 | 2022 |
|-------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Expenses for treatment abroad | 9,400,993.08 EUR | 5,582,350.00 EUR |
| Decrease (%) | 40.62% | |

Table 63. Expenses for treatment abroad

Limited progress was made in infrastructure in 2022.

e) Legal framework

The means of assessing the legal framework regarding healthcare include:

- *Law on Health Insurance;*
- *Health Sector Strategy; and*
- *Health Promotion and Education Strategy.*

375 Kosovo Agency of Statistics, Health Statistics 2021, at <https://www.suharekaonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/statistikat-e-shendetesise-2021.pdf>; Health Statistics 2022, at <https://askapi.rks-gov.net/Custom/d96bb22b-6b14-420c-a4e0-097928f283f0.pdf>. Note: The statistical data includes the number of total beds in regional hospitals, all clinics of UCCK and private hospitals.

376 Kosovo Agency of Statistics, Health Statistics 2021, at <https://www.suharekaonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/statistikat-e-shendetesise-2021.pdf>.

377 Balkans Group interview with an official from the Health Insurance Fund, Prishtina, November 2022.

378 Balkans Group interview with an official from the Health Insurance Fund, Prishtina, December 2023.

Law on Health Insurance

In October 2022, the Ministry of Health stated that in compliance with the Legislative Programme 2022, a new draft of the Law on Health Insurance has been drafted.³⁷⁹ Despite this, no progress has been made on its adoption and the Law on Health Insurance of 2013 is still in place. **No progress**

Health Sector Strategy

Health Sector Strategy 2017-2021 expired in 2021. The new 2023-2030 Strategy has been drafted and awaiting approval.³⁸⁰ **Limited progress**

Health Promotion and Education Strategy

No progress has been made in the implementation of the Action Plan of Health Promotion and Education Strategy.³⁸¹ **No Progress**

No progress was made in the legal framework in 2022.

| Public Health | No Progress | Limited Progress | Some Progress | Good Progress | Very Good Progress |
|-----------------------------|-------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Access to healthcare | ✓ | | | | |
| Quality healthcare | ✓ | | | | |
| Covid-19 measures | | | | ✓ | |
| Infrastructure | | ✓ | | | |
| Legal Framework | ✓ | | | | |
| The Overall progress | | ✓ | | | |

Table 64. The overall progress for Health

The overall progress in Health is assessed as 'limited' in 2022.

³⁷⁹ Gazeta Express, Finally the draft-law on health insurance is approaching finalization, 11 October 2022, at <https://www.gazetaexpress.com/me-ne-fund-draft-projektligji-per-sigurime-shendetesore-drejt-finalizimit/>.

³⁸⁰ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 8 November 2023.

³⁸¹ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 8 November 2023.



Dimension VIII

**GOOD
NEIGHBOURLY
RELATIONS**

Summary and Analysis

Good neighbourly relations is an important criterion for measuring a country’s progress towards the EU and a prerequisite for peace and stability in the region.³⁸²

In Kosovo’s case, additional importance is placed on this criterion, especially in terms of the dialogue with Serbia. Good Neighbourly Relations falls under Block I: Political Criteria in the NPISAA, emphasising Kosovo’s obligation to establish and maintain good relations with all countries in the region and to increase cooperation in various fields, such as economy, security, human rights and freedoms etc.³⁸³ It also focuses on the ongoing dialogue with Serbia and new memberships in regional and international initiatives and organisations.³⁸⁴

To assess whether Kosovo has achieved progress in meeting the good neighbourly relations criteria, one indicator is used:

1. Cooperation

This indicator uses a number of sub-indicators to reflect the progress in this sector:

- a) *Bilateral relations*- or information on meetings held and agreements reached between Kosovo and neighbour countries;
- b) *Regional cooperation*- or information regarding Kosovo’s participation in regional initiatives, memberships in new organisations, developments on the implementation of the Green Agenda and Common Regional Market;
- c) *Dialogue with Serbia*- or information on the EU-facilitated dialogue process, implementation of agreements, and identification of missing persons.

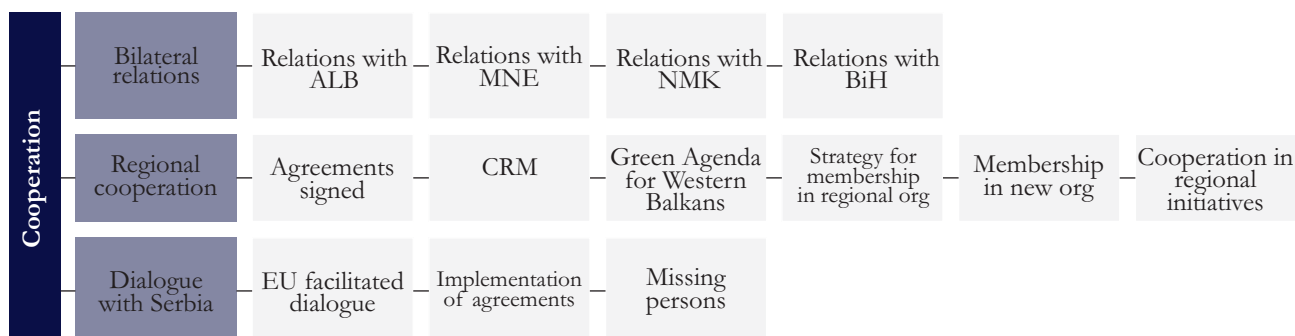


Figure 53. Good neighbourly relations and its sub-indicators

a) Bilateral Relations

The means of assessing the bilateral relations include:

- *relations with Albania;*
- *relations with Montenegro;*
- *relations with North Macedonia; and*
- *relations with Bosnia and Herçegovina.*

Relations with Albania

The good relations between two countries continued during the reported period. In November 2022, the two governments signed 19 agreements, addressing various issues. The implementation of these

382 EEAS, Mogherini: Good neighbourly relations, cooperation in the Western Balkans essential for their EU perspective, May 2019, at https://www.eeas.europa.eu/node/62177_en.

383 Government of the Republic of Kosovo, National Programme for Implementation of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (NPISAA), 2016, at https://kryeministri.rks-gov.net/repository/docs/National_Programme_for_Implementation_of_the_Stabilisation_and_Association_Agreement.pdf.

384 Ibid.

agreements has improved due to the establishment of an intergovernmental coordination secretariat.³⁸⁵

Very good progress

Relations with Montenegro

Relations with Montenegro continued to be strong. Several meetings took place between the prime ministers and foreign ministers on the regional and international platforms.³⁸⁶

In May 2022, Prime Minister Albin Kurti and then-Prime Minister of Montenegro Dritan Abazović met during the World Economic Forum. They express their intention to enhance the already strong relations between the two countries. Additionally, they deliberated on ways to facilitate the free movement of citizens, promote investments, and collaborate on joint infrastructure projects that connect Kosovo and Montenegro, including the Deçan-Plavë and Pejë-Rozhajë roads.³⁸⁷

In May 2022, Deputy Prime Minister Besnik Bislimi hosted a meeting with President Đukanović, who expressed their readiness for closer cooperation between the two governments. They also discussed preparing to move towards signing economic agreements for the benefit of the citizens and the overall well-being, contributing to the economic development of both countries.³⁸⁸

In July 2022, Prime Minister Albin Kurti met the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Montenegro, Ranko Krivokapić. They discussed the latest developments of Montenegro and bilateral relations between the two countries, grounded in good neighbourliness and mutual appreciation. The meeting acknowledged the close cooperation between the two countries.³⁸⁹ **Very good progress**

Relations with North Macedonia

Good relations between Kosovo and North Macedonia have continued for the reporting period. In April 2022, Prime Minister Kurti held a meeting with Prime Minister Dimitar Kovacevski of North Macedonia. The discussions focused on further increasing interstate relations, the common objective of both countries for European Union integration, and the commitment to long-term peace and stability in the region.³⁹⁰ **Very good progress**

Relations with Bosnia and Herzegovina

Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina have not developed formal relations yet. Bosnia and Herzegovina do not recognize Kosovo's independence, thus a strict visa regime is still in place.³⁹¹ **No progress**

Good progress was made in bilateral relations in 2022.

b) Regional cooperation

The means of assessing regional cooperation include:

- *agreements signed;*
- *Common Regional Market;*
- *Green Agenda for Western Balkans*
- *Strategy for membership and participation in regional organisations;*
- *membership in new organisations; and*
- *cooperation in regional initiatives.*

³⁸⁵ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 12 October 2022.

³⁸⁶ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 8 November 2023.

³⁸⁷ Prime Minister Kurti met the Prime Minister of Montenegro, Dritan Abazovic, May 2022, at <https://kryeministri.rks-gov.net/lajme/page/179/>.

³⁸⁸ Deputy Prime Minister Besnik Bislimi organized a working lunch with the President of Montenegro, Milo Đukanović, May 2022, at <https://kryeministri.rks-gov.net/blog/zevendeskryeministri-besnik-bislimi-organizoi-dreke-pune-me-presidentin-e-malit-te-zi-milo-jukanovic-2/>.

³⁸⁹ Prime Minister Kurti met the Foreign Minister of Montenegro, Ranko Krivokapić, July 2022 at <https://kryeministri.rks-gov.net/blog/kryeministri-kurti-takoi-ministrin-e-jashtem-te-malit-te-zi-ranko-krivokapiq/>

³⁹⁰ Prime Minister Kurti met the Prime Minister of North Macedonia, Dimitar Kovacevski, 8 april 2022 at <https://kryeministri.rks-gov.net/blog/kryeministri-kurti-takoi-kryeministrin-e-maqedonise-se-veriut-dimitar-kovacevski/>.

³⁹¹ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 8 November 2023.

Agreements signed

In 2021, there was only one regional agreement signed, while in November 2022, the Prime Ministers of the WB6 countries signed three agreements that enable mobility within the region, facilitating travel using ID cards and mutual recognition of university qualifications as well as professional qualifications for doctors, dentists, and architects.³⁹² Kosovo was the first country to ratify the three agreements, but several other decisions agreed at technical level still remain blocked.³⁹³ **Some progress**

Common Regional Market (CRM)

Trade is a fundamental aspect of the CRM, fostering the free movement of goods and services, creating a trade-friendly regulatory environment, and contributing to regional economic integration. Efforts by the administrations of WB economies have led to discussions on 15 CEFTA Joint Committee Decisions and 1 CEFTA Additional Protocol. Out of these, 4 processes meet all conditions for adoption, 3 are nearly ready, and 6 are in the phase of text discussions.

However, the Joint Committee, the sole decision-making body in CEFTA, has not adopted decisions prepared for adoption in 2022, causing delays in benefiting companies and citizens and disrupting legislative and policy plans.³⁹⁴

Limited human capacities of Western Balkans administrations pose a challenge, particularly in coordinating and executing the regional actions outlined in the CRM Action Plan within the agreed-upon timeframe. **Some progress**

Green Agenda for the Western Balkans

In 2022, the government adopted the necessary by-laws to implement the Law on Energy Performance of Buildings. Ongoing activities include the enhancement of expertise and tools for building certification, focusing on the development of new registry and certification software. Plans to promote nearly zero-energy buildings and a building renovation strategy have been drafted, but their adoption is still pending.³⁹⁵

The Government has discussed a draft National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP) with the working groups. The Energy Strategy for the period 2022-2031 underwent public consultation in June 2022 and was adopted in December 2022. The draft NECP is scheduled to be finalised in alignment with the Energy Strategy and submitted for review to the Secretariat in the first half of 2023.³⁹⁶

Kosovo is conducting final consultations with stakeholders at the economic actions to enhance opportunities for deploying nature-based solutions to mitigate and adapt to climate change.³⁹⁷ **Some progress**

Strategy for Membership in regional organisations

The government has not developed a strategic approach that leads to membership and participation in new organisations and initiatives.³⁹⁸ **No progress**

Membership in new organisations

Kosovo submitted the candidacies to chair MARRI, WBF, RCC and continued to actively pursue this agenda with the aim of advancing Kosovo's role in regional organisations. However, in 2022, Kosovo did not join new regional organisations.³⁹⁹ **No progress**

Cooperation in regional initiatives

Kosovo has a low representation in regional organisations and initiatives. In particular, Kosovo participates in the following regional organisations and initiatives, including Brdo-Brijuni Initiative, Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA), Energy Community Secretariat (EnC), the Migration, Asylum, Refugees Regional Initiative (MARRI), Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO), South-East European Cooperation Process (SEEC), Transport Community Treaty (TcT), Center for Security Cooperation (RACVIAC) and Western Balkans Fund (WBF).⁴⁰⁰

³⁹² European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 8 November 2023.

³⁹³ Ibid.

³⁹⁴ Ibid.

³⁹⁵ RCC, Green Agenda for the Western Balkans Action Plan implementation report 2022.

³⁹⁶ Ibid.

³⁹⁷ Ibid.

³⁹⁸ Balkans Group report, Kosovo's Participation and Representation in Regional Organisations-Mapping the gaps and opportunities, 2021.

³⁹⁹ Balkans Group interview with an official from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Prishtina, December 2023.

⁴⁰⁰ Balkans Group report, Kosovo's Participation and Representation in Regional Organizations – Mapping the gaps and opportunities, October 2021 and Balkans Group interview with an official from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Prishtina, December 2023.

However, Kosovo is a full member of only the six following organisations and initiatives, including the RCC, TCT, EnC, MARRI, RYCO and WBF.)⁴⁰¹

In 2022, Kosovo did not manage to join any new regional initiatives. **No progress**

Limited progress was made in regional cooperation in 2022.

c) Dialogue with Serbia

The means of assessing the dialogue with Serbia include:

- *EU-facilitated dialogue;*
- *implementation of agreements; and*
- *missing persons.*

EU-facilitated dialogue

In 2022, the dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia continued with regular monthly meetings on the level of Chief Negotiators and in August a high-level meeting took place in Brussels.⁴⁰² In June, the countries adopted a roadmap for implementing the Energy Agreements, facilitating the full implementation of the 2013 and 2015 Dialogue Agreements on energy. In August, an agreement was reached concerning the use of entry-exit documents. Serbia committed to eliminating these documents for Kosovo ID holders, while Kosovo agreed not to introduce them for Serbian ID holders. Additionally, in April a working group led by the EU was formed with the aim to find a permanent solution for the licence plates.⁴⁰³ **Some progress**

Implementation of agreements

Both Kosovo and Serbia need to make further commitments and actively engage in implementing the agreement reached under the EU-led dialogue. Some agreements have been fully implemented, some partially, and others have not been implemented at all.⁴⁰⁴

In 2022, Serbia committed to opening both entry and exit lanes at Common Crossing-Points (CCP) Merdare and relocating their authorities to the new premises at CCP Mutivode, as part of their IBM (Integrated Border Management) commitments.⁴⁰⁵ **Limited progress**

Missing persons

There are 1621 missing persons identified from the last war in Kosovo.⁴⁰⁶ For the reporting period, the countries participated in negotiations on a political declaration on Missing Persons, but no agreements were reached.⁴⁰⁷ **No progress**

Limited progress was made in dialogue with Serbia in 2022.

| Cooperation | No Progress | Limited Progress | Some Progress | Good Progress | Very Good Progress |
|-----------------------------|-------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Bilateral Relations | | | | ✓ | |
| Regional Cooperation | | ✓ | | | |
| Dialogue with Serbia | | ✓ | | | |
| The overall progress | | | ✓ | | |

Table 65. The overall progress for Good Neighbourly Relations

The overall progress in Good Neighbourly Relations is assessed as 'Some' in 2022.

⁴⁰¹ Ibid.

⁴⁰² European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 8 November 2023.

⁴⁰³ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁴ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 12 October 2022.

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁶ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 8 November 2023.

⁴⁰⁷ European Commission, Kosovo Country Report, 12 October 2022.

ANNEX I. KOSOVO'S PROGRESS IN NUMBERS

Eight (8) dimensions are used to measure Kosovo's progress in 2022, including: Rule of Law, Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, Democratisation, Economy, Sustainable Development, Education, Health and Good Neighbourly Relations. Each dimension incorporates 14 indicators and 65 sub-indicators. The sub-indicators use 234 means of assessment which are developed as criteria for assessing the progress made in the specific sector/area. The methodology categories institutions' progress in five levels: 'no progress', 'limited progress', 'some progress', 'good progress' and 'very good progress'. These levels are determined based on the developments made in 2022, calculated as per the methodology and compared to the previous year (2021). This section presents the progress in numerical value (using a scale of 0-4), where 0 equals no progress, 1 – limited progress, 2 – some progress, 3 – good progress, and 4 – very good progress.

DIMENSION I: RULE OF LAW (ROL)

In 2022, rule of law has shown some progress (2.27/4). The main indicators, namely Judiciary (2.86/4), the Fight Against Corruption (2.39/4), and the Fight Against Organised Crime (1.57/4), have each demonstrated similar rates of progress. Within the judiciary, Kosovo's institutions have made very good progress in the legal framework (4/4), in access to justice (3.6/4) and in accountability (3.5/4), good progress in transparency (3/4) and independence and impartiality (2.5/4), some progress in efficiency and effectiveness (1.75/4) and administration of justice (1.62/4). For the sub indicator the fight against corruption, very good progress was reported in legal framework (4/4) and in prevention of corruption (3.66/4), good progress is noted in measures against high-level corruption (2.66/4), limited progress in public perception of corruption (1/4) and in the confiscation of assets (0.66/4). Within the fight against organised crime, some progress was made in measures against organised crime (1.75/4), in the fight against drugs/narcotics (1.75/4), in the fight against money laundering (1.75/4), in fight against trafficking in persons (1.5/4) and in legal framework (1.5/4). Limited progress was reported in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism (1.2/4).

| RULE OF LAW | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Progress in numbers |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---------------------|
| Judiciary | | | | | | |
| Efficiency and Effectiveness | | | ✓ | | | 1.75 |
| Independence and Impartiality | | | | ✓ | | 2.5 |
| Accountability | | | | | ✓ | 3.5 |
| Transparency | | | | ✓ | | 3 |
| Access to Justice | | | | | ✓ | 3.6 |
| Administration of Justice | | | ✓ | | | 1.62 |
| Legal Framework | | | | | ✓ | 4 |
| The Overall Progress | | | | ✓ | | 2.85 |
| Fight Against Corruption | | | | | | |
| Public Perception of corruption | | ✓ | | | | 1 |
| Prevention | | | | | ✓ | 3.66 |
| Measures Against high-level corruption | | | | ✓ | | 2.66 |
| Confiscation of Assets | | ✓ | | | | 0.66 |
| Legal Framework | | | | | ✓ | 4 |
| The Overall Progress | | | ✓ | | | 2.39 |

| Fight against organised crime | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|--|--|------|
| Level of organised crime | | | | | | - |
| Measures against organised crime | | ✓ | | | | 1.75 |
| Drugs/ Narcotics | | ✓ | | | | 1.75 |
| Money Laundering | | ✓ | | | | 1.75 |
| Fight against terrorism and violent extremism | ✓ | | | | | 1.2 |
| Trafficking in persons | | ✓ | | | | 1.5 |
| Legal Framework | | ✓ | | | | 1.5 |
| The Overall Progress | | ✓ | | | | 1.57 |
| Rule of Law | | | | | | |
| Judiciary | | ✓ | | | | 2.85 |
| Fight against corruption | | ✓ | | | | 2.39 |
| Fight against organised crime | | ✓ | | | | 1.57 |
| The Overall Progress | | ✓ | | | | 2.27 |

0 - No progress | 1 - Limited Progress | 2 - Some Progress | 3 - Good Progress | 4 - Very Good Progress

DIMENSION II: HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOM

Limited progress has been evaluated in the area of human rights and fundamental freedoms, with an overall score of 0.8/4. Likewise limited progress was reported in the overall civil and political rights (1/4) and in marginalised groups (1/4). No progress has been noted in freedom of expression (0/4), freedom of religion (0/4), freedom of association (0/4), gender equality (0/4), minority rights (0/4) and children's rights (0/4). Within economic, social and cultural rights, limited progress was assessed in the right to work (1/4) and access to education (1/4), and no progress in property rights (0/4). In the legal framework, very good progress was noted in the Law on Property Rights (4/4), good progress in the Law on Child Protection (2/4), and no progress in Law on Religious Freedoms (0/4) and Law on Gender Equality (0/4).

| HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOM | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Progress in numbers |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---------------------|
| Fundamental Rights | | | | | | |
| Civil and political rights | ✓ | | | | | 0.25 |
| Economic, social and cultural rights | | ✓ | | | | 0.66 |
| Legal framework | | | ✓ | | | 1.5 |
| The Overall Progress | | ✓ | | | | 0.8 |

0 - No progress | 1 - Limited Progress | 2 - Some Progress | 3 - Good Progress | 4 - Very Good Progress

DIMENSION III: DEMOCRATISATION

Progress in the area of democratisation is limited with a score of 1.17/4. Some progress was reported in public administration (1.72/4). Limited progress is noted in media and civil society (1.35/4) and political stability (0.6/4). For the sub indicator public administration, good progress was reported in its functioning (3/4). Some progress was made in the public finances (2.33/4), the legal framework (1.5/4), service

delivery (1.5/4). while no progress was made in representation (0/4). Within media and civil society, there has been some progress in civil society (2.3/4), some progress in freedom of media (1.75/4), and no progress in the legal framework (0). Within political stability, there is limited progress in security and public order (1/4), in relations between the government and opposition (0.5/4) and in constitutional and legal order. No progress is noted in functioning of institutions and (0.4/4). No elections took place in 2022, resulting in no data for the Barometer's sub-indicators.

| DEMOCRATISATION | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Progress in numbers |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---------------------|
| Media and Civil Society | | | | | | |
| Freedom of media | | | ✓ | | | 1.5 |
| Civil Society | | | ✓ | | | 2.3 |
| Legal framework | ✓ | | | | | 0 |
| The Overall Progress | | ✓ | | | | 1.27 |
| Political stability | | | | | | |
| Functioning of institutions | ✓ | | | | | 0.4 |
| Security and Public Order | | ✓ | | | | 1 |
| Relations between the government the and opposition | | ✓ | | | | 0.5 |
| Constitutional and legal order | | ✓ | | | | 0.5 |
| The Overall Progress | | ✓ | | | | 0.6 |
| Elections | | | | | | |
| Election administration | | | | | | - |
| Campaign environment | | | | | | - |
| Legal framework | | | | | | - |
| Women's participation | | ✓ | | | | 1 |
| The Overall Progress | | ✓ | | | | 1 |
| Public Administration | | | | | | |
| Functioning of public administration | | | | ✓ | | 3 |
| Service delivery | | | ✓ | | | 1.5 |
| Public finances | | | ✓ | | | 2.33 |
| Representation | ✓ | | | | | 0 |
| Legal framework | | | ✓ | | | 1.5 |
| The Overall Progress | | | ✓ | | | 1.66 |
| Democratisation | | | | | | |
| Media and civil society | | ✓ | | | | 1.27 |
| Political stability | | ✓ | | | | 0.6 |
| Elections | | | | | | - |
| Public administration | | | ✓ | | | 1.66 |
| The Overall Progress | | ✓ | | | | 1.17 |

0 - No progress | 1 - Limited Progress | 2 - Some Progress | 3 - Good Progress | 4 - Very Good Progress

DIMENSION IV: ECONOMY

Progress in the dimension of the economy for the reporting period is limited (0.96/4). Some progress has been noted in macroeconomic stability (1.5/4), with very good progress in GDP growth (4/4), limited progress in GDP per capita (1/4) and revenues (1/4), and no progress in trade balance (0/4). The overall progress in investments is assessed as limited (1.33/4), with good progress in flow of Foreign Direct Investments (3/4) and no progress in reorganisation of Kosovo Investment and Enterprise Support Agency (0/4). Limited progress has been noted in employment and safety at work as well (1.33/4), with some progress in health insurance (2/4), in level of unemployment (2/4) and no progress in fatal incidents at work (0/4). Within the legal framework, there is no progress in Strategy on Employment and Social Policy (0/4), Law on Labour (0/4) and Law on Socio Economic Council (0/4).

| ECONOMY | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Progress in numbers |
|-------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---------------------|
| Economic development | | | | | | |
| Macroeconomic stability | | | ✓ | | | 1.5 |
| Business environment | ✓ | | | | | 0.33 |
| Investments | | ✓ | | | | 1.33 |
| Employment and safety at work | | ✓ | | | | 1.33 |
| Human Capital | | | | | | - |
| Legal framework | ✓ | | | | | 0.33 |
| The Overall Progress | | ✓ | | | | 0.96 |

0 - No progress | 1 - Limited Progress | 2 - Some Progress | 3 - Good Progress | 4 - Very Good Progress

DIMENSION V: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Limited progress is reported in the area of sustainable development with an overall score of 0.99/4. Likewise, there is limited progress on energy (1.12/4), and on environment (0.86/4). Within energy, there is good progress in energy efficiency (2.5/4), limited progress in renewable energy (1/4) and in energy supply (1/4), and no progress in the legal framework (0/4). For the environment indicator, there is limited progress in waste management (1.33/4), in water and land management (1/4), in air quality (1/4) and in the legal framework (1/4). No progress was reported in forest management (0/4).

| SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Progress in numbers |
|-----------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---------------------|
| Energy | | | | | | |
| Energy supply | | ✓ | | | | 1 |
| Energy efficiency | | | | ✓ | | 2.5 |
| Investments | | ✓ | | | | 1 |
| Renewable Energy | ✓ | | | | | 0 |
| The Overall Progress | | ✓ | | | | 1.12 |

| Environment | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|---|---|--|--|--|-------------|
| Air quality | | ✓ | | | | 1 |
| Water and land management | | ✓ | | | | 1 |
| Waste management | | ✓ | | | | 1.33 |
| Forest management | ✓ | | | | | 0 |
| Legal framework | | ✓ | | | | 1 |
| The Overall Progress | | ✓ | | | | 0.86 |
| Sustainable Development | | | | | | |
| Energy | ✓ | | | | | 1.12 |
| Environment | ✓ | | | | | 0.86 |
| The Overall Progress | ✓ | | | | | 0.99 |

0 - No progress | 1 - Limited Progress | 2 - Some Progress | 3 - Good Progress | 4 - Very Good Progress

DIMENSION VI: EDUCATION

Limited progress is reported in Education, which is evaluated with a score of 0.85/4. Some progress was made in spending in education (2.25/4) and limited progress in governance and quality of education (1/4). However, no progress is observed in access to education (0.16/4), and in alignment with the labour market (0/4).

| EDUCATION | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Progress in numbers |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---------------------|
| Educational provision | | | | | | |
| Spending in education | | | ✓ | | | 2.25 |
| Access to education | ✓ | | | | | 0.16 |
| Governance and quality of education | | ✓ | | | | 1 |
| Alignment with the labour market | ✓ | | | | | 0 |
| The Overall Progress | | ✓ | | | | 0.85 |

0 - No progress | 1 - Limited Progress | 2 - Some Progress | 3 - Good Progress | 4 - Very Good Progress

DIMENSION VII: HEALTH

There is limited progress in public health with the score of 1.06/4. Very good progress is noted in Covid-19 measures (3/4). Limited progress was reported in infrastructure (1.33/4) and in quality of healthcare (1/4). Whereas no progress was noted in access to healthcare (0/4) and in the legal framework (0/4).

| HEALTH | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Progress in numbers |
|-----------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---------------------|
| Public Health | | | | | | |
| Access to healthcare | ✓ | | | | | 0 |
| Quality healthcare | | ✓ | | | | 1 |
| Covid-19 measures | | | | ✓ | | 3 |
| Infrastructure | | ✓ | | | | 1.33 |
| Legal Framework | ✓ | | | | | 0 |
| The Overall Progress | | ✓ | | | | 1.06 |

0 - No progress | 1 - Limited Progress | 2 - Some Progress | 3 - Good Progress | 4 - Very Good Progress

DIMENSION VIII: GOOD NEIGHBOURLY RELATIONS

Some progress was made in the area of good neighbourly relations with an overall score of 1.66/4. Good progress is noted in terms of bilateral relations (3/4), whereas regional cooperation (1/4) and dialogue with Serbia (1/4) made limited progress.

| GOOD NEIGHBOURLY RELATIONS | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Progress in numbers |
|-----------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---------------------|
| Cooperation | | | | | | |
| Bilateral Relations | | | | ✓ | | 3 |
| Regional Cooperation | | ✓ | | | | 1 |
| Dialogue with Serbia | | ✓ | | | | 1 |
| The Overall Progress | | | ✓ | | | 1.66 |

0 - No progress | 1 - Limited Progress | 2 - Some Progress | 3 - Good Progress | 4 - Very Good Progress

The **Balkans Policy Research Group** is an independent, regional think-tank based in Prishtina, Kosovo. We provide timely policy analysis and recommendations on a wide array of state-building issues; institutional and democratic consolidation; minority integration and good neighbourly relations; European integration and policy change. We have decades of experience in policy reporting and development, strategic thinking, and advocacy with governmental, international, and non-governmental organisations.

Our rigorous, detailed, impartial reporting, always based on in-depth fieldwork, is the core of our work. We go beyond mainstream positions and seek to make change through creative, feasible, well-measured, and forward-looking policy recommendations to help develop strong, vibrant democracies, prosperous states, and societies based on the rule of law in the Western Balkans.

We engage in high-level advocacy, domestically, regionally, and internationally, impacting policy discussions and options with regard to the home affairs and European policies toward the Western Balkans.

Balkans Group has developed other tools and platforms to achieve this change:

The **Policy Dialogue** promotes Kosovo's domestic dialogue, cohesion, and reform-making agenda.

The **Policy Forum** (a Think-Tankers High-level Advocacy Forum) is committed to enhancing the dialogue between civil society and institutions.

The **Kosovo Serbia Policy Advocacy Group** (a forum for Cross-Border Civil Society Cooperation) that aims to communicate, promote and enhance dialogue toward full normalisation between Kosovo and Serbia, and their societies.

Women in Politics promotes the empowerment of women and girls; their security and inclusiveness; and is committed to strengthening the Women Caucus' impact and reach throughout Kosovo.

Youth in Politics aims to train and build the capacity of young people active in political parties in Kosovo in areas such as the rule of law, public policy, good governance, economic development and social policy, education policy, regional cooperation, etc.

The **Dialogue Platform** promotes the dialogue process between Kosovo and Serbia, by informing the wider public and generating debate about the agreements, benefits, and challenges of the Dialogue.

The **Expert Support Component** provides policy support to the government and key institutions on key policy areas, peace, and state-building agendas.

The **Policy Idea Lab** platform aims to bring new policy tools and spaces where policy-makers, members of the institutions, advisors, experts, the CSO community, academics, etc., share their knowledge, debate policy processes and topics, and devise solutions.

The **Green and Digital** platform aims to tackle the most pressing policy needs to help the twin transition, both the green and digital simultaneously.

