



COI Factsheet

Safe Country of Origin concept - Kosovo^{*}

April 2025

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



The below factsheet on Kosovo was produced in early 2025 by the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) in accordance with article 12(2) of its founding Regulation (EU) 2021/2023, and in response to a request from the European Commission (Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs - DG HOME) to support its work on the designation of safe countries of origin at Union level.

This factsheet was peer-reviewed by a range of partners, including the DG HOME (international unit), the Directorate General for Enlargement and Eastern Neighbourhood (DG ENEST) and the European External Action Service. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) also provided valuable input into this process. This factsheet was drafted in accordance with the EUAA COI Methodology, which emphasises the use of diverse sources to ensure factual, balanced and reliable information.

While this factsheet was structured around the defining criteria of a safe country of origin as stipulated in the Asylum Procedure Regulation (EU) 2024/1348, the EUAA (and its partners) played no part in assessing whether such criteria were met for Kosovo to be designated as a safe country of origin at Union level. That assessment was performed entirely by the European Commission and was based on a range of relevant and available sources of information.



Table of Contents

Kosovo	4
Legal and political situation – overview.....	5
Security situation.....	9
Human rights situation.....	10
Specific profiles	12
Legal remedies against human rights violations	16
Bibliography.....	20

COI Factsheet - Safe Countries of Origin (SCO)

Kosovo*

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The information in the factsheet does not necessarily reflect the opinion of EUAA and makes no political statement whatsoever.

Sources were accessed between 17 March and 2 April 2025. Some additional information was added during the finalisation of this factsheet in response to feedback received during the quality control process, until 11 April 2025. Any event taking place after this date is not included in this document.

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Legal and political situation – overview

System of government and political situation

Kosovo is a parliamentary democracy,¹ with an executive branch consisting of a president and a prime minister.² The legislative branch is represented by the Assembly, which is composed of 120 deputies elected for a four-year term.³ According to the Constitution and electoral laws, non-majority communities are guaranteed ‘a fixed number of seats in the assembly seats and ministerial positions.’⁴ In the Assembly, 10 seats are reserved for Kosovo’s Serb community and another 10 seats for members of the Bosniak, Turkish, Roma, Ashkali, Gorani, and Egyptian communities.⁵

In the February 2025 parliamentary election, Prime Minister Albin Kurti’s Self-Determination Movement Party (Vetevendosje!)⁶ won nearly 40 % of the vote, gaining 48 seats in the Assembly⁷ but falling short of an absolute majority.⁸ No government was formed as of 11 April 2025.⁹

Kosovo applied for EU membership in December 2022. In April 2024, Kosovo’s government approved the National Programme for European Integration (2024-2028).¹⁰

Tensions between Kosovo and Serbia have continued since Kosovo’s declaration of independence in 2008.¹¹ Under the EU-facilitated Dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina,, which began in 2011 and is based upon the UN General Assembly Resolution 64/298 (2010), both Kosovo and Serbia agreed to ‘develop normal, good-neighbourly relations with each other on the basis of equal rights.’¹² Normalisation of relations is an essential condition on the European path of both parties.¹³ However, progress on agreements reached under Belgrade-Pristina dialogue has been slow.¹⁴ Since mid-2022, Prime Minister Albin Kurti’s government

¹ CoE-PACE, Application by Kosovo* for membership of the Council of Europe, 28 March 2024, [url](#), p. 25

² Encyclopaedia Britannica, Kosovo, Government and society, 25 March 2025, [url](#)

³ Kosovo, Assembly of the Republic of Kosova, Role and Competencies of the Assembly, n.d., [url](#); Encyclopaedia Britannica, Kosovo, Government and society, 25 March 2025, [url](#)

⁴ Bertelsmann Stiftung, BTI 2024 Country Report, Kosovo, 19 March 2024, [url](#), p. 6

⁵ Kosovo, Assembly of the Republic of Kosova, Role and Competencies of the Assembly, n.d., [url](#)

⁶ AP, Kosovo’s prime minister looks for allies for new Cabinet after failing to win parliamentary majority, 10 February 2025, [url](#)

⁷ Election Guide, Republic of Kosovo, 20 March 2025, [url](#)

⁸ AP, Kosovo’s election committee details results of legislative election as Kurti toils to form Cabinet, 16 March 2025, [url](#)

⁹ Balkan Insight, Week in Review: Lost in Uncertainty, 11 April 2025, [url](#)

¹⁰ EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 88

¹¹ RFE/RL, Why Kosovo’s Election Matters For The Region And The World, 9 February 2025, [url](#)

¹² EEAS, Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue: Agreement on the path to normalisation between Kosovo and Serbia, 27 February 2023, [url](#)

¹³ EC, Key findings of the 2023 Report on Kosovo, 8 November 2023, [url](#)

¹⁴ UNMIK, Report of the Secretary-General, S/2024/741, 14 October 2024, [url](#), para 17; EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), pp. 59-60

has taken strict measures, including replacing Serbian license plates¹⁵ and shutting down Serbian-backed institutions and banks.¹⁶ In December 2023, the Kosovo Central Bank adopted a regulation establishing the euro as the only currency for cash transactions, effective from 1 February 2024, ending the use of the Serbian dinar in Kosovo-Serb majority areas where it had been used since 1999.¹⁷ The adoption of the Central Bank's regulation on cash operations has significantly impacted the economic and social rights of Kosovo Serbs and other non-majority communities, particularly Roma,¹⁸ by restricting their access to salaries, pensions, and social assistance received from Serbia.¹⁹

Demographics and migration profile

As of 2024, the Kosovo Agency of Statistics (KAS) estimated the population of Kosovo at 1.6 million,²⁰ with Albanians constituting 92.8 %.²¹ The second largest community is the Serbs,²² who comprise between 2.3 %²³ and 6%²⁴ of the population and form a local majority in northern Kosovo and enclave municipalities.²⁵ The Serbian population in Kosovo, and particularly in northern Kosovo, have refused to participate in population census organised by central institutions.²⁶ Smaller non-majority communities are Bosniaks, Goranis, Turks, Roma, Ashkiali, and Egyptians.²⁷

Sunni Islam is the main religion among Kosovo Albanians, while most of Serbs and some Roma adhere to Eastern Orthodoxy.²⁸ Approximately 1.3 %²⁹ – 1.8 %³⁰ of the population, primarily Albanians and Croats, are Roman Catholic.³¹ The Constitution designates Albanian and Serbian as official languages and states that 'Turkish, Bosnian and Roma languages have the status of official languages at the municipal level or will be in official use at all levels as provided by law.'³²

¹⁵ RFE/RL, Why Kosovo's Election Matters For The Region And The World, 9 February 2025, [url](#)

¹⁶ RFE/RL, Why Kosovo's Election Matters For The Region And The World, 9 February 2025, [url](#); RFE/RL, Kosovo Raids Parallel Serb Institutions Amid Simmering Ethnic Tensions, 15 January 2025, [url](#)

¹⁷ UN, Pristina's Unilateral Action Regulating Currency Exacerbates Mistrust, Kosovo Mission Head Tells Security Council, Underlining Importance of Open Dialogue, 8 February 2024, [url](#)

¹⁸ UNMIK, Report of the Secretary-General, S/2024/741, 14 October 2024, [url](#), para 4

¹⁹ UNMIK, Report of the Secretary-General, S/2024/741, 14 October 2024, [url](#), para 4; EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 38

²⁰ KAS, Key indicators, n.d., [url](#)

²¹ KAS, Kosovo's population by ethnicity and censuses 1948-2024 [Albanian, Serb, other; 2024], n.d., [url](#)

²² Bertelsmann Stiftung, BTI 2024 Country Report, Kosovo, n.d., [url](#), p. 7

²³ KAS, Kosovo's population by ethnicity and censuses 1948-2024 [Albanian, Serb, other; 2024], n.d., [url](#)

²⁴ BBC News, Kosovo: Why is violence flaring between ethnic Serbs and Albanians, 2 October 2023, [url](#)

²⁵ Bertelsmann Stiftung, BTI 2024 Country Report, Kosovo, 19 March 2024, [url](#), p. 7

²⁶ Nimani, P. et al, The Constitutional and Legal Position of National Minorities in Kosovo: Ahtisaari Package and the Privilege of Minorities, 20 September 2023, [url](#), p. 3

²⁷ MRG, Kosovo (unrecognised state), March 2018, [url](#)

²⁸ Encyclopaedia Britannica, Kosovo, Religion of Kosovo, 25 March 2025, [url](#)

²⁹ Bertelsmann Stiftung, BTI 2024 Country Report, Kosovo, 19 March 2024, [url](#), p. 7

³⁰ Encyclopaedia Britannica, Kosovo, Religion of Kosovo, 25 March 2025, [url](#)

³¹ Bertelsmann Stiftung, BTI 2024 Country Report, Kosovo, 19 March 2024, [url](#), p. 7

³² Kosovo, Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo (with amendments I-XXVI), September 2020, [url](#), Art. 5 (1), 5 (2)

Around 800 000 Kosovars live abroad, making Kosovo one of the top five countries with the highest emigration rates globally. In recent years, migration from Kosovo has been primarily driven by economic factors, with most migrants residing in the EU.³³ In 2023, remittances from abroad amounted to 15-18 % of Kosovo's GDP (1.9 billion US dollars), one of the highest rates worldwide, with nearly 67 % of families receiving remittances from abroad.³⁴

Since 1 January 2024, Kosovo passport holders can travel to the EU visa-free.³⁵ Since October 2024,³⁶ holders of Serbian passports issued by the Serbian Coordination Directorate³⁷ in northern Kosovo³⁸ can also travel visa-free to the EU.³⁹

In 2024, 6 791 Kosovo nationals applied for asylum in the EU27, compared to 3 085 applications in 2023 and 3 194 in 2022. The recognition rate stood at 5.7 % in 2024, down from 10.1 % in 2023 and 10 % in 2022.⁴⁰

As of October 2024, there were more than 15 500 internally displaced people (IDPs) in Kosovo,⁴¹ who remain displaced due to the armed conflict of 1989-1999.⁴² As noted by the United Nations Interim Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), in the period between 16 March 2024 and 14 September 2025, UNHCR recorded 13 voluntary returns from members of Kosovo's non-majority communities, displaced within and outside Kosovo, comprising seven Kosovo Serbs, five Roma, and one Ashkali. Since 2000, a total number of 29 418 IDPs from Kosovo's non-majority communities 'found durable solutions in Kosovo,' with the highest numbers among Kosovo Serbs (12 831), Egyptians and Ashkalis (7 780), Roma (4 095), Bosniaks (1 879), and Goranis (1 464).⁴³

³³ World Bank (The), International mobility as a development strategy: Kosovo Country Report, June 2024, [url](#), pp. 6-7

³⁴ World Bank (The), International mobility as a development strategy: Kosovo Country Report, June 2024, [url](#), p. 8

³⁵ EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 3

³⁶ EY, European Union adopts new visa-free policy for Serbian nationals entering the Schengen area, 22 October 2024, [url](#)

³⁷ Official Journal of the European Union, Regulation (EU) 2024/2495 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 September 2024 amending Regulation (EU) 2018/1806 as regards holders of Serbian passports issued by the Serbian Coordination Directorate (Koordinaciona uprava), 23 September 2024, [url](#)

³⁸ EY, European Union adopts new visa-free policy for Serbian nationals entering the Schengen area, 22 October 2024, [url](#)

³⁹ Official Journal of the European Union, Regulation (EU) 2024/2495 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 September 2024 amending Regulation (EU) 2018/1806 as regards holders of Serbian passports issued by the Serbian Coordination Directorate (Koordinaciona uprava), 23 September 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁰ EUAA, EPS data as of 27 March 2025.

⁴¹ UNMIK, Report of the Secretary-General, S/2024/741, 14 October 2024, [url](#), para 73

⁴² IDMC, Kosovo, n.d., [url](#)

⁴³ UNMIK, Report of the Secretary-General, S/2024/741, 14 October 2024, [url](#), para 73

International legal instruments

Kosovo's Constitution, adopted in 2008,⁴⁴ integrates key international human rights instruments,⁴⁵ stating that human rights guaranteed in the main international agreements and instruments 'are directly applicable' in the country. These agreements include: the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights (ECHR) and its protocols, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and its protocols, the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (RCR), and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhumane or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT),⁴⁶ and, since September 2020, the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention).⁴⁷ In 2022, the Kosovo government made a decision to integrate the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CERD) into its Constitution;⁴⁸ however, this constitutional amendment is still pending,⁴⁹ awaiting Assembly vote.⁵⁰

Kosovo applied for membership of the Council of Europe in May 2022. In March 2024, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) noted that Kosovo's legal framework 'is broadly in line with Council of Europe standards', with its Constitution being 'a very progressive instrument' that ensures 'direct applicability' of human rights agreements and instruments.⁵¹ In October 2024, the European Commission noted that 'in general, the legal framework guarantees the protection of fundamental rights and is in line with European standards.'⁵² The Constitution requires that human rights and fundamental freedoms be interpreted in accordance with the jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR).⁵³

⁴⁴ Kosovo, Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo (with amendments I-XXVI), September 2020, [url](#)

⁴⁵ EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 31

⁴⁶ Kosovo, Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo (with amendments I-XXVI), September 2020, [url](#), Art. 22

⁴⁷ CoE, The National Assembly of Kosovo* decided to apply the Istanbul Convention, 25 September 2020, [url](#)

⁴⁸ Europe House, Inclusive Kosovo, 29 January 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁹ EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 31

⁵⁰ UNMIK, SRSG Ziadeh Welcomes Next Step to Inclusion of International Disability Rights Treaty in Kosovo Law, 1 August 2023, [url](#); EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 31

⁵¹ CoE-PACE, Application by Kosovo* for membership of the Council of Europe, 28 March 2024, [url](#)

⁵² EEAS, EU Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World, 2023 Country Updates, 29 May 2024, [url](#), p. 15; EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 6

⁵³ Kosovo, Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo (with amendments I-XXVI), September 2020, [url](#), Art. 53; OSCE, Trial Monitoring Report on Detention on Remand, October 2023, [url](#), p. 11

Security situation

Kosovo ranked 56th out of 163 countries on the 2024 Global Peace Index,⁵⁴ its score indicating a medium level of peacefulness.⁵⁵ Terrorism has ‘very low’ impact in the country, according to the Global Terrorism Index.⁵⁶ As of October 2024, 11 individuals were incarcerated for crimes linked to terrorism. The European Commission indicated that ‘militant Salafist ideology remains a threat’ in Kosovo, while concerns are also rising about the growing influence of ethnonationalist and far-right extremist groups.⁵⁷

Since 1999, Kosovo's military security and support for its police and judiciary have been provided under UN mandate by the international peacekeeping force (KFOR) - deployed by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) - and the European Union Rule of Law Mission (EULEX).⁵⁸ The Kosovo Security Force (KSF), established in 2009, ‘is a lightly armed volunteer force’ with duties that fall outside the scope of regular police work such as fire-fighting and civil protection, crisis management, management of hazardous material and explosive ordnance disposal.⁵⁹ In the event of security incidents, the Kosovo Police serves as the primary responder, followed by EULEX as the second responder, and KFOR as the third.⁶⁰

Despite the continuation of the EU-facilitated Dialogue on the normalisation of relations between Serbia and Kosovo,⁶¹ ‘tensions in the north of Kosovo remained high’⁶² and the risk of escalation persisted.⁶³ In 2021, Pristina began enforcing its authority in northern Kosovo.⁶⁴ However, the security situation in northern Kosovo remained fragile and relations between Belgrade and Pristina strained.⁶⁵

On 29 May 2023, in the northern municipality of Zvečan, the KFOR intervened to break up Kosovo Serb protestors after tensions had been building between demonstrators and the Kosovo Police following the forceful installment of Kosovo Albanian mayors into the municipal buildings on 26 May. Tensions between local Kosovo Serbs and Kosovo Albanian authorities

⁵⁴ Global Peace Index (GPI), which ranks 163 independent states and territories according to their level of peacefulness. It measures the state of peace across three domains: the level of societal Safety and Security; the extent of Ongoing Domestic and International Conflict; and the degree of Militarisation. Produced by the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP), the GPI is the world's leading measure of global peacefulness. See IEP, Global Peace Index 2024: Measuring Peace in a Complex World, June 2024, [url](#), p. 2

⁵⁵ IEP, Global Peace Index 2024. Measuring peace in a complex world, June 2024, [url](#), p. 8

⁵⁶ IEP, Global Terrorism Index 2024, February 2024, [url](#), p. 7

⁵⁷ EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 43

⁵⁸ Euronews, What will a new defence agreement in southeastern Europe mean for the region?, 25 March 2025, [url](#)

⁵⁹ NATO, NATO's role in Kosovo, 10 February 2025, [url](#)

⁶⁰ NATO, NATO's role in Kosovo, 10 February 2025, [url](#); UNMIK, Report of the Secretary-General, 2 April 2024, [url](#), p. 18

⁶¹ EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 59; EEAS, Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue, 5 March 2025, [url](#)

⁶² EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 60

⁶³ UN Security Council, United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo; Report of the Secretary-General, 14 October 2024, [url](#), para. 97

⁶⁴ International Crisis Group, Toward Normal Relations between Kosovo and Serbia, 30 January 2024, [url](#)

⁶⁵ UNMIK, Report of the Secretary-General, 2 April 2024, [url](#), paras 3, 4, 7

escalated into violence, resulting in injuries to numerous KFOR soldiers and protesters.⁶⁶ Violence broke out again in September 2023, in Banjska village in the Zvečan municipality, when a group of heavily armed individuals erected a roadblock. One Kosovo police officer and three armed Kosovo Serb assailants died as a result of the attack and the subsequent exchange of fire, and another two Kosovo officers were injured.⁶⁷ This incident prompted NATO to temporarily deploy additional troops to join the KFOR between October and December 2023.⁶⁸

On 29 November 2024, an explosion damaged the water canal in Zubin Potok municipality, a part of Kosovo's critical infrastructure, jeopardising the water and electricity supply to significant areas of Kosovo but ultimately causing only temporary restrictions to the water supply in several Kosovo regions.⁶⁹ A series of reported instances of excessive use of force, primarily by the specialised police units but also by regular community police officers deployed in northern Kosovo, composed of predominantly Kosovo Albanian officers, have repeatedly raised tensions on the ground.⁷⁰

Human rights situation

The Constitution of Kosovo guarantees fundamental human rights and freedoms, the rule of law, social justice, respect for human dignity, equality before the law and non-discrimination.⁷¹ In October 2024, the European Commission found Kosovo's anti-discrimination legislation 'broadly in line with European and international standards', noting, however, that its 'implementation is limited due to weak institutional capacity.' In addition, the European Commission, noted that 'discrimination predominantly affects rights related to employment, education and access to social services and healthcare, and the right to use an official language.'⁷² Sources reported on discrimination against non-majority communities,⁷³ LGBTIQ persons,⁷⁴ and persons with disabilities.⁷⁵

⁶⁶ RFE/RL, Dozens of KFOR Troops, Protesters Injured As Clashes Break Out In Serb-Majority Towns In Northern Kosovo, 29 May 2023, [url](#)

⁶⁷ UNMIK, Report of the Secretary-General, 2 April 2024, [url](#), para. 4

⁶⁸ UNMIK, Report of the Secretary-General, 2 April 2024, [url](#), para. 7

⁶⁹ EEAS, Kosovo: Statement by the High Representative on the water canal attack in Zubin Potok, 31 November 2024, [url](#)

⁷⁰ EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 38

⁷¹ Kosovo, Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo (with amendments I-XXVI), September 2020, [url](#), Art. 1 (2), 7, 21, 23, 24, 35

⁷² EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 35

⁷³ Civil Society Report on Human Rights in Kosovo in 2022, May 2023, [url](#), p. 80

⁷⁴ AI, Kosovo 2023, n.d., [url](#); EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 37

⁷⁵ World Bank Blogs, Disability-inclusive development in Kosovo: Why it matters and what the World Bank is doing, 14 June 2023, [url](#); EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 36

Hate speech has been reported against non-majority communities and the LGBTIQ community,⁷⁶ particularly on social media and by public figures, including members of Parliament.⁷⁷ Civil society groups have reported on ‘cases of strategic lawsuits against public participation’ (SLAPP),⁷⁸ with investigative journalists increasingly facing threats with lawsuits by politicians and businesspersons.⁷⁹

The Constitution defines the state as secular and guarantees freedom of belief, conscience, and religion.⁸⁰ The Law on freedom of religion is pending adoption,⁸¹ as of January 2025.⁸² In its 2024 report, the European Commission detailed that concerns about freedom of religion in Kosovo were related to the Serbian Orthodox Church (SOC), noting as examples the deportation of a SOC monk for national security reasons, desecration acts and attempts to misappropriate SOC’s religious sites, and the authorities’ failure to use SOC’s ‘full constitutional name in public statements.’⁸³

The Constitution prohibits capital punishment,⁸⁴ torture, and cruel, inhumane, or degrading treatment or punishment.⁸⁵ No cases of ill-treatment of prison inmates were reported in 2023.⁸⁶ While the prison system largely meets the UN Standard Minimum Rules, ‘further action is needed to safeguard the rights of prisoners, especially women, girls, non-majority community members and mentally ill prisoners.’⁸⁷ Correctional institutions lack specialised facilities for inmates with mental disorders (including women and minors),⁸⁸ LGBTIQ people, and, in some cases, members of non-majority communities (Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptians), reportedly faced discrimination by prison staff and fellow inmates.⁸⁹ Furthermore, some facilities have poor housing conditions, including humidity, inadequate ventilation, insufficient bedding and sanitation.⁹⁰ The proportion of prisoners in detention on remand/pre-trial detention has significantly increased since 2020, reaching 38 % in December 2022 (660 out of 1 724 detainees),⁹¹ before declining to 35.6 % as of April 2023.⁹²

⁷⁶ UN Human Rights Council, Visit to Serbia and Kosovo; Report of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, Irene Khan, 2 May 2024, [url](#), para 87

⁷⁷ EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 35

⁷⁸ EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 33

⁷⁹ UN Human Rights Council, Visit to Serbia and Kosovo; Report of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, Irene Khan, 2 May 2024, [url](#), para 76

⁸⁰ Kosovo, Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo (with amendments I-XXVI), September 2020, [url](#), Art. 8, 38

⁸¹ EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 33

⁸² EC, Midday press briefing from 07/01/2025, [url](#)

⁸³ EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 33

⁸⁴ Kosovo, Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo (with amendments I-XXVI), September 2020, [url](#), Art. 25

⁸⁵ Kosovo, Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo (with amendments I-XXVI), September 2020, [url](#), Art. 27

⁸⁶ KRCT, Human Rights in Correctional Institutions in Kosovo, Monitoring Report – 2023, April 2024, [url](#), p. 44

⁸⁷ EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 32

⁸⁸ KRCT, Human Rights in Correctional Institutions in Kosovo, Monitoring Report – 2023, April 2024, [url](#), pp. 28-29, 34

⁸⁹ KRCT, Human Rights in Correctional Institutions in Kosovo, Monitoring Report – 2023, April 2024, [url](#), pp. 29-30

⁹⁰ KRCT, Human Rights in Correctional Institutions in Kosovo, Monitoring Report – 2023, April 2024, [url](#), pp. 53-54

⁹¹ OSCE, Trial Monitoring Report on Detention on Remand, October 2023, [url](#), p. 7

⁹² WPB, Kosovo/Kosova, n.d., [url](#)

Labour laws to protect the rights of employees are frequently violated. Kosovo is a source, transit, and destination country for trafficking in human beings, with children being particularly vulnerable to exploitation, including forced begging and sex work.⁹³

Specific profiles

The overview below is not an exhaustive list of profiles that may face specific human rights concerns.

Non-majority communities - As noted by the European Commission, the implementation of the anti-discrimination law ‘remains largely ineffective in combating anti-gypsyism.’⁹⁴ Persons from **Gorani**,⁹⁵ **Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian** communities face difficulties in access to quality education, employment,⁹⁶ and social services.⁹⁷ Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptians, are particularly affected by school dropout, early marriage,⁹⁸ high levels of unemployment, and poverty.⁹⁹ The same communities are frequently perceived as a cheap labour force, often being hired for low-paying, short-term, insecure, and ‘highly informal’ jobs.¹⁰⁰ Within the Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities, domestic violence¹⁰¹ and early marriage remain widespread.¹⁰² Although growing awareness has led to more reports, authorities often respond inadequately. In some cases, police officers treat early marriage as a cultural norm and merely seek consent from the children and their parents.¹⁰³

The European Commission noted that relations between the Kosovo government and the **Kosovo Serb community** ‘remain difficult.’¹⁰⁴ Endorsing policies aimed at reducing Serbia’s influence,¹⁰⁵ in January 2024, the Kosovo authorities started closing Serbian-run institutions in northern Kosovo, including various administrative institutions¹⁰⁶ and municipal offices.¹⁰⁷ The closure of nine post offices in northern Kosovo in August 2024 for operating without a licence cut off essential financial and postal services to the residents, disrupting money transfers, payments to Serbian-run institutions, including for education and healthcare, and the delivery of

⁹³ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2024 – Kosovo, n.d., [url](#)

⁹⁴ EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 38

⁹⁵ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2024 – Kosovo, n.d., [url](#)

⁹⁶ EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 38

⁹⁷ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2024 – Kosovo, n.d., [url](#)

⁹⁸ EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 38

⁹⁹ UN Women, Kosovo Gender Country Profile, November 2024, [url](#), p. 44

¹⁰⁰ Kosovo 2.0, ‘I always knew I was being Discriminated Against’, 5 September 2023, [url](#)

¹⁰¹ CoE (Council of Europe), Fifth Opinion on Kosovo*, Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, 16 February 2023, [url](#), p. 16

¹⁰² EC, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 36

¹⁰³ CoE-FCNM, Fifth Opinion on Kosovo; Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (ACFC); Adopted on 16 February 2023 [ACFC/OP/V(2022)2], 16 February 2023, [url](#), paras. 93, 94

¹⁰⁴ EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 38

¹⁰⁵ NZZ, Caught Between Belgrade and Pristina, Kosovo’s Serbs face an uncertain future, 10 April 2025, [url](#)

¹⁰⁶ Euronews, Kosovo closes two Serbian institutions in the north, 8 January 2025, [url](#)

¹⁰⁷ UNMIK, Report of the Secretary-General, S/2024/741, 14 October 2024, [url](#), paras 3, 7

social benefit payments.¹⁰⁸ In February 2025, local media reported on the closure of post offices in Gracanice/Gracanica in the Pristina District and Rahovec/Orahovac in the south-western part of Kosovo.¹⁰⁹

As noted by the UNMIK, ‘several Kosovo Serbs’ were arrested between 16 March 2024 and 14 September 2024, including those suspected of injuring KFOR personnel during the protests in Zvečan in May 2023. Serb organisations criticised the measures used against these persons as disproportional, citing lengthy pretrial detention in high security prisons.¹¹⁰

Journalists - Kosovo ‘is bound by international standards in relation to freedom of expression’ and has a diverse media landscape, yet the UN Special Rapporteur has highlighted concerns about impunity for crimes against journalists, media pluralism, and use of minority languages.¹¹¹ In 2024, Reporters Without Borders (RSF) ranked Kosovo 75th out of 180 countries in its World Press Freedom Index, down from 56th place in 2023, noting that ‘media freedom is threatened by politicised regulation, gag suits, insufficient access to information and an increase in physical attacks.’¹¹²

Journalists face violence,¹¹³ physical attacks, threats, harassment,¹¹⁴ administrative pressure,¹¹⁵ and smear campaigns.¹¹⁶ Journalists investigating drug trafficking or environmental pollution face physical attacks and interference from criminal networks.¹¹⁷ Women journalists face serious safety risks, including attacks, threats, harassment, intimidation, and online hate speech.¹¹⁸ In 2023, the Association of Journalists of Kosovo (AJK) documented over 70 cases of attacks and threats against journalists, media workers and media organisations, which is the

¹⁰⁸ UNMIK, Report of the Secretary-General, S/2024/741, 14 October 2024, [url](#), para 35

¹⁰⁹ Balkan Insight, ‘Just Surviving’: Kosovo Serbs Struggle with Shutdown of Serbian-Run Institutions, 3 February 2025, [url](#)

¹¹⁰ UNMIK, Report of the Secretary-General, S/2024/741, 14 October 2024, [url](#), para 36

¹¹¹ UN Human Rights Council, Visit to Serbia and Kosovo; Report of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, Irene Khan, 2 May 2024, [url](#), para 68

¹¹² RSF, Kosovo, n.d., [url](#)

¹¹³ UN Human Rights Council, Visit to Serbia and Kosovo; Report of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, Irene Khan, 2 May 2024, [url](#), para 74

¹¹⁴ Bertelsmann Stiftung, BTI 2024 Country Report, Kosovo, n.d., [url](#), p. 10; EEAS, EU Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World, 2023 Country Updates, 29 May 2024, [url](#), p. 15; CPJ, Kosovo journalist Berat Buzhala, Nationale newsroom receive death threat, 5 December 2024, [url](#); HRW, Serbia/Kosovo – Events of 2024, 16 January 2025, [url](#)

¹¹⁵ Safejournalists.net, Kosovo – Indicators on the level of media freedom and Journalists’ Safety Index 2023, 14 August 2024, [url](#), p. 8

¹¹⁶ EEAS, EU Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World, 2023 Country Updates, 29 May 2024, [url](#), p. 15; HRW, Serbia/Kosovo – Events of 2024, 16 January 2025, [url](#); CPJ, Kosovo journalist Berat Buzhala, Nationale newsroom receive death threat, 5 December 2024, [url](#)

¹¹⁷ RSF, Kosovo, n.d., [url](#)

¹¹⁸ Network of Women Journalists of Kosova, Position and Safety of Women Journalists in Kosovo, 2025, [url](#), p. 10

highest figure since the start of the monitoring in 2014.¹¹⁹ This was followed by over 50 cases in 2024¹²⁰ and 25 cases in the first quarter of 2025.¹²¹

Despite police and judicial investigations into attacks on journalists,¹²² prosecutions have remained rare.¹²³ Violence against journalists has particularly increased during political tensions between Kosovo and Serbia.¹²⁴ The situation in the northern of Kosovo is restrictive, leading to self-censorship among the public, media, and civil society organisations (CSOs), contributing to challenges in investigating ‘complex cases’ in the region.¹²⁵

LGBTIQ persons - In 2024, Kosovo ranked 27th out of 49 countries in the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association’s (ILGA) ranking of legal and policy practices for LGBTIQ persons in European countries.¹²⁶ In April 2019, Kosovo introduced a new criminal code that increases protections for LGBTIQ persons by legally defining a ‘hate act.’¹²⁷ However, Kosovo has not adopted a strategy and action plan on the rights of LGBTIQ persons.¹²⁸ In April 2024, Prime Minister Albin Kurti revealed plans to legalise same-sex partnerships,¹²⁹ but the adoption of the Civil Code, which would allow this, remains pending.¹³⁰ The government supported the Pride Week and the Pride Parade,¹³¹ which took place in Pristina in June 2024¹³² without any recorded incidents.¹³³

LGBTIQ persons experience social pressure to conceal their sexual orientation¹³⁴ and face discrimination, which limits their access to healthcare, psychological support, and legal services.¹³⁵ Transgender persons encounter obstacles in making legal changes to their identification documents.¹³⁶ Parliamentary debates on LGBTIQ rights have sparked

¹¹⁹ AKG, Case Search [Year: 2023], 28 December 2023, [url](#)

¹²⁰ AKG, Case Search [Year: 2024], 28 December 2024, [url](#)

¹²¹ AKG, Case Search [Year: 2025], 28 March 2025, [url](#)

¹²² EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 7

¹²³ RSF, Kosovo, n.d., [url](#)

¹²⁴ RSF, Kosovo, n.d., [url](#)

¹²⁵ EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 7

¹²⁶ ILGA-Europe, Rainbow Map 2024, [url](#)

¹²⁷ Bertelsmann Stiftung, BTI 2024 Country Report, Kosovo, n.d., [url](#), p. 13

¹²⁸ EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 37

¹²⁹ ILGA-Europe, Annual Review of the Human Rights Situation of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and Intersex People Covering the Period of January to December 2024, Kosovo, n.d., [url](#)

¹³⁰ EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 37; ILGA-Europe, Annual Review of the Human Rights Situation of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and Intersex People Covering the Period of January to December 2024, Kosovo, n.d., [url](#)

¹³¹ EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 37

¹³² ILGA-Europe, Annual Review of the Human Rights Situation of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and Intersex People Covering the Period of January to December 2024, Kosovo, n.d., [url](#)

¹³³ EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 34

¹³⁴ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2024 – Kosovo, n.d., [url](#)

¹³⁵ EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 37

¹³⁶ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2024 – Kosovo, n.d., [url](#)

discriminatory language and hate speech against LGBTIQ persons, with ‘inconsistent’ institutional response to online hate speech and homophobia.¹³⁷

Women - The legal, policy, and institutional framework on gender equality and domestic violence complies with international and European standards. In 2023, a new Law on the Prevention and Protection from Domestic Violence, Violence Against Women, and Gender-Based Violence introduced stronger mechanisms for protecting women and holding perpetrators accountable.¹³⁸ However, challenges remain in strengthening its implementation and ensuring equal access to justice for women.¹³⁹ Economic inequality persists, as a higher percentage of women live below the poverty line compared to men. Gender-based discrimination, societal norms, and unpaid care duties continue to limit women's participation in the workforce.¹⁴⁰ As of 8 March 2025, only around 20 % of women are employed.¹⁴¹

Violence against women is widespread in Kosovo,¹⁴² with domestic violence being the most prevalent form of gender-based violence.¹⁴³ Between July 2023 and June 2024, Kosovo police recorded a total of 2 856 cases of domestic violence, 79 % of which involved women.¹⁴⁴

Cases of femicides and rape continued to draw public attention and ignite protests.¹⁴⁵ In April 2024, following the murders of two women within four days, the Minister for Justice of Kosovo convened a high-level meeting with government and international officials to address violence against women. Attendees emphasised that judges and prosecutors need to take cases of domestic and gender-based violence ‘more seriously.’¹⁴⁶ The belief, whether based on perception or experience, that police officers are judgmental toward victims of gender-based and domestic violence continues to discourage many women from reporting such incidents.¹⁴⁷ Reporting of domestic violence declined in 2023. Judicial and prosecutorial responses remain inadequate, with frequent failures to apply relevant laws.¹⁴⁸ Although free legal aid has been expanded to include all female victims of gender-based violence, only a small number receive

¹³⁷ EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 37

¹³⁸ CDF and GLPS, Institutional treatment of domestic violence cases; July 2023 – June 2024, November 2024, [url](#), p. 15

¹³⁹ EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 35, 36

¹⁴⁰ UN Women, Kosovo Gender Country Profile, November 2024, [url](#), p. 5

¹⁴¹ EEAS, Kosovo, The Economic Power of Including More Women in the Labour Market, 8 March 2025, [url](#)

¹⁴² UN Women, Women-led Organizations Drive Support for Survivors of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Kosovo, 21 October 2024, [url](#)

¹⁴³ CDF and GLPS, Institutional treatment of domestic violence cases; July 2023 – June 2024, November 2024, [url](#), p. 7

¹⁴⁴ CDF and GLPS, Institutional treatment of domestic violence cases; July 2023 – June 2024, November 2024, [url](#), p. 12; EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 36

¹⁴⁵ EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 36; SMART Balkans, Monthly Monitoring Highlights April: femicides, genocide denials and hatred aimed towards journalists, 16 May 2024, [url](#)

¹⁴⁶ UN Security Council, United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo; Report of the Secretary-General, 14 October 2024, [url](#), para. 59

¹⁴⁷ UN Women, Kosovo Gender Country Profile, November 2024, [url](#), p. 23

¹⁴⁸ EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 36

legal representation in court.¹⁴⁹ Victims have also reported encountering ‘overworked social workers, unhelpful or absent victim advocates and a lack of information about their rights or available remedies and assistance.’¹⁵⁰

Persons with disabilities - The European Commission noted that Kosovo must ensure the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. According to the European Commission, there is ‘a clear lack of harmonisation’ of Kosovo’s legislation and policies ‘with international texts and the EU *acquis* on the rights of persons with disabilities.’ Moreover, ‘the adoption of the Law on the rights, evaluation, treatment, and status recognition of and services and benefits for persons with disabilities is overdue.’¹⁵¹

Persons with disabilities constitute around 8 % of Kosovo’s population and face ‘deep-rooted systemic inequalities and barriers,’ which put them at a higher risk of poverty, unemployment, and poorer health and education outcomes.¹⁵² People with disabilities face obstacles in accessing healthcare and rehabilitation, social services, education, and physical infrastructure. Children with disabilities face barriers in accessing preschool education, with an estimated over 88 % remaining outside the school system. Children who are enrolled in schools, lack the necessary support services.¹⁵³ Women and non-majority communities with disabilities (particularly, members of Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities) face additional barriers due to ‘multiple layers of discrimination and restrictive cultural terms.’¹⁵⁴

Legal remedies against human rights violations

Overview of legal framework and mechanisms in place - Kosovo’s legal system generally aligns with European human rights standards.¹⁵⁵ The judiciary is composed of three levels: Basic Courts, the Court of Appeals, and the Supreme Court.¹⁵⁶ The Kosovo Judicial Council is responsible for ensuring the independence and impartial functioning of the judiciary by overseeing judicial appointments, performance, administration, and accountability.¹⁵⁷

The Constitutional Court is independent from Kosovo’s general court system and has final authority over disputes related to the Constitution.¹⁵⁸ Individuals may turn to the Constitutional

¹⁴⁹ EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 37

¹⁵⁰ AI, Kosovo: Authorities are failing domestic violence victims, 31 August 2023, [url](#)

¹⁵¹ EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 37

¹⁵² World Bank Blogs, Disability-inclusive development in Kosovo: Why it matters and what the World Bank is doing, 14 June 2023, [url](#)

¹⁵³ EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), pp. 36-37

¹⁵⁴ World Bank Blogs, Disability-inclusive development in Kosovo: Why it matters and what the World Bank is doing, 14 June 2023, [url](#)

¹⁵⁵ EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 6

¹⁵⁶ Kosovo, LAW No. 06/L-054 On Courts, 18 December 2018, [url](#), Art. 8

¹⁵⁷ Kosovo, What is the mandate of the KJC?, n.d., [url](#)

¹⁵⁸ Kosovo, Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo, September 2020, [url](#), Art. 4 (6)

Court for review of alleged violations by public authorities of their individual rights and freedoms provided by the constitution, but only after exhaustion of all other legal remedies.¹⁵⁹

Kosovo has improved interinstitutional coordination to promote and enforce human rights. The Ombudsperson Institution plays a ‘key role’ in that respect, according to the European Commission.¹⁶⁰ It is an independent body tasked with protecting and promoting human rights, operating under the Constitution,¹⁶¹ the Law on the Ombudsperson¹⁶², the Law on Gender Equality¹⁶³, and the Law on Protection from Discrimination.¹⁶⁴ It investigates human rights violations, either through individual complaints or on its own initiative, and monitors whether laws and policies comply with national and international human rights standards. The Ombudsperson Institution can submit cases to the Constitutional Court and act as *amicus curiae* in proceedings involving human rights and equality. Although it cannot overturn court decisions, it addresses delays in judicial processes, requests interim measures when necessary, and provides legal opinions and recommendations to public authorities.¹⁶⁵

In 2024, the Ombudsperson Institution received 1 410 complaints involving 4 528 citizens,¹⁶⁶ opened 582 investigations,¹⁶⁷ and issued 176 recommendations,¹⁶⁸ of which only 21 % were fully and 4 % partially implemented.¹⁶⁹ Despite advancements in digitalisation, the institution faced key challenges, including limited implementation of recommendations and reduced cooperation from public authorities.¹⁷⁰

Access to justice in Kosovo remains limited, especially in rural areas.¹⁷¹ The mass resignation of Kosovo Serb judges, prosecutors, and administrative staff in northern Kosovo in 2022¹⁷² ‘hindered the administration of justice’ in the region,¹⁷³ particularly in ensuring the right to a fair

¹⁵⁹ Kosovo, Constitutional Court, Competencies, n.d., [url](#)

¹⁶⁰ EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 31

¹⁶¹ Kosovo, Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo, September 2020, [url](#), Arts. 132-135

¹⁶² Kosovo, Law No. 05/L -019 On Ombudsperson, 26 JUNE 2015 [url](#)

¹⁶³ Kosovo, Law No 05/L -20 on Gender Equality, 26 June 2015, [url](#), Art. 13

¹⁶⁴ Kosovo, Law No. 05/L-21 on the Protection from discrimination, 26 June 2015, [url](#), Art. 19

¹⁶⁵ Kosovo, Ombudsperson Institution – About us, n.d., [url](#)

¹⁶⁶ Kosovo, Ombudsperson Institution, Raporti vjetor 2024, 28 March 2025, [url](#), p. 18

¹⁶⁷ Kosovo, Ombudsperson Institution, Raporti vjetor 2024, 28 March 2025, [url](#), p. 28

¹⁶⁸ Kosovo, Ombudsperson Institution, Raporti vjetor 2024, 28 March 2025, [url](#), p. 18

¹⁶⁹ Kosovo, Ombudsperson Institution, Raporti vjetor 2024, 28 March 2025, [url](#), p. 32

¹⁷⁰ Kosovo, Ombudsperson Institution, The Ombudsperson presented the work of 2024 to the media, 24 December 2024, [url](#)

¹⁷¹ Bertelsmann Stiftung, BTI 2024 Country Report Kosovo, 19 March 2024, [url](#), p. 8

¹⁷² On 2 November, Kosovo Police Regional Director for the North, Nenad Đurić, publicly stated that Kosovo Serb officers would not enforce the government’s decision on phased RKS license plate registration, resulting in his suspension the following day. In response, on 5 November, after a meeting in Zvečan/Zvečan, Srpska Lista announced that all Kosovo Serb political and institutional representatives in northern Kosovo would resign from their positions in Kosovo institutions. See OSCE Mission in Kosovo, The Mitrovicë/Mitrovica Justice System. Status before and after the mass resignation of Kosovo Serb judges, prosecutors, and administrative staff, 1 February 2024, [url](#), p. 11

¹⁷³ UN Security Council, United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo; Report of the Secretary-General, 14 October 2024, [url](#), para. 58

trial within a reasonable time.¹⁷⁴ Despite case reassignments and transfers, the number of Kosovo Serb judges, prosecutors and translators remained insufficient to meet demand.¹⁷⁵

EULEX reported procedural irregularities in cases involving Kosovo Serbs, including the police informing prosecutors of operations verbally and without proper notice. Kosovo Serb defence lawyers also raised concerns about delayed access to case files regarding their clients.¹⁷⁶

While the legal framework guarantees the independence and impartiality of the judiciary, implementation 'requires improvement'. Political interference has been reported, including public criticism of specific cases and pressure on judges and prosecutors.¹⁷⁷

Although the quality of justice improved,¹⁷⁸ issues related to procedural rights persist, including delayed and excessively prolonged court proceedings, lack of professional interpreters and translators affecting victims' rights, excessive use of pre-trial detention, and insufficient consideration of alternative measures.¹⁷⁹ Human and financial resources across the justice system remain limited.¹⁸⁰

Legal aid is available for both legal representation and advice. In 2023, 6 081 individuals received legal aid. Most cases (5 781) involved non-criminal matters, with more aid granted for cases not brought to court (3 148) than those that proceeded (2 933).¹⁸¹ Relevant data for 2024 could not be found within the time constraints of this factsheet.

Kosovo has made limited progress in fighting corruption. Notable steps included the adoption of integrity plans by institutions, a new legislation on the Special Prosecution Office, and an increase in the number of final convictions in corruption cases.¹⁸² However, indictments in organised crime and corruption cases are often of low quality, leading to a high number of acquittals. This issue is partly driven by performance assessments for prosecutors and judges that focus more on the quantity and speed of cases handled rather than the standard of their work.¹⁸³ Implementation of new measures was hindered by limited resources, weak institutional capacity, political interference, and persistent concerns over impartiality and

¹⁷⁴ OSCE Mission in Kosovo, The Mitrovicë/Mitrovica Justice System. Status before and after the mass resignation of Kosovo Serb judges, prosecutors, and administrative staff, 1 February 2024, [url](#), pp. 6, 27

¹⁷⁵ EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), pp. 28, 29

¹⁷⁶ UN Security Council, United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo; Report of the Secretary-General, 14 October 2024, [url](#), Annex I, p. 18

¹⁷⁷ EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 27

¹⁷⁸ EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 28

¹⁷⁹ EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 37

¹⁸⁰ EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 31

¹⁸¹ CEPEJ, HFII: Towards a better evaluation of the results of judicial reform efforts in the Western Balkans "DASHBOARD Western Balkans" Data collection: 2023, 9 July 2024, [url](#), p. 2

¹⁸² EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 6

¹⁸³ OSCE, The Western Balkans Trial Monitoring Report: From Paper to Practice - Evaluating the Effectiveness of Judicial Responses to Serious Organised Crime and Corruption, 5 July 2024, [url](#), p. 70

accountability of the judicial and prosecutorial system.¹⁸⁴ EULEX¹⁸⁵ reported a pattern of lenient verdicts or acquittals in ‘high-profile cases.’¹⁸⁶ It also noted persistent delays and procedural inefficiencies, including frequent unproductive or cancelled hearings. A recurring concern was the Court of Appeals’ practice of returning cases to basic courts for retrial, often resulting in ‘unnecessarily’ extended proceedings.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁴ EC, Commission Staff Working Document, Kosovo* 2024 Report, 30 October 2024, [url](#), p. 6; Kosovo Law Institute, Civil Society report on the implementation of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption in Kosovo, 22 August 2024, [url](#), p. 65

¹⁸⁵ EULEX conducts targeted monitoring of selected judicial cases and trials, particularly those linked to developments in northern Kosovo. See UNMIK, Report of the Secretary-General, 2 April 2024, [url](#), Annex I, p. 17

¹⁸⁶ UNMIK, Report of the Secretary-General, 2 April 2024, [url](#), Annex I, p. 18; UN Security Council, United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo; Report of the Secretary-General, 14 October 2024, [url](#), Annex I, p. 18
High profile cases mentioned regard former EULEX cases, war-crime cases, and cases involving prominent public figures or influential persons. See UNMIK, Report of the Secretary-General, 2 April 2024, [url](#), Annex I, p. 18

¹⁸⁷ UN Security Council, United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo; Report of the Secretary-General, 14 October 2024, [url](#), Annex I, p. 18

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