



REPÚBLICA
PORTUGUESA

Representação Permanente de Portugal
Junto da União Europeia

INVITATION TO PANEL

Taking stock on Kosovo's rule of law: good governance in a newborn state

More than 10 years after Kosovo unilaterally declared its independence (UDI) from Serbia, the country still faces numerous obstacles in its quest for stability. Although various urgent matters keep shaping domestic and foreign policy of the country, the ultimate goal of *de facto* compliance with rule of law is an ongoing challenge for Kosovo.

Progress on the road towards a consolidated democracy in this post-conflict society has been slow. Where positive developments are achieved by legal amendments and institution building, many shortcomings are also present. While a review of the whole Rule of Law sector mandated by the Ministry of Justice in 2016 revealed its uncoordinated application, the adoption of the revised Law on the Prevention of Conflicts of Interest in 2018 was a positive step in the fight against corruption. Moreover, just this year the Criminal Code of Kosovo was amended to widen protection against LGBT hate crimes. Nonetheless, the implementation of adopted laws and regulations remains challenging and prevents the country from meeting the conditions required by the rule of law.

In Europe's self-entitled "newborn" state, institutional reforms seek to assert a stable functional democracy and a rule of law that promotes citizens' trust in their government. The independence and impartiality of the judiciary is key, along with fighting corruption and assuring fundamental equal rights to all. Civil society organizations and international missions play a watchdog role over domestic affairs, namely at a time when the political scene is changing after national elections.

In this context, EU's approach towards Pristina will be discussed in the key-matters of rule of law and fundamental rights, and the way forward. The conference will outline the steps taken, the support from the EU and Member States and the lines of action capable of consolidating a strong democratic base. 10 years after the UDI, Vocal Europe and the Portuguese Permanent Representation to the European Union invite you to join us in taking stock on Kosovo's rule of law building process and the road ahead.

Please confirm your attendance at the latest by 8 of November 2019 by sending an e-mail to event@vocaleurope.eu. We remain at your disposal for any further information.

Time: 13 November 2019, 09:00 – 11:00

Venue: Avenue de Cortenbergh 12, 1040 Brussels

The Program

- 09h00 **Registration**
- 09h30 **Welcoming Remarks**
José Fernando Costa Pereira, Representative to the Political and Security Committee, Portuguese Permanent Representation to the EU
- 09h35 **Introduction**
Ebubekir Isik, Policy Analyst, Vocal Europe (Moderator)
- 09h45 **Input statements**
Elsa Fenet, Head of Division, Western Balkans, European External Action Service

David Cullen, Head of Unit, DG Near, European Commission
- 10h05 **First Q&A Session**
- 10h15 **Expert Perspectives**
Mimoza Kusari-Lila, Member of Assembly of the Republic of Kosovo, Member of Vocal Europe's Advisory Board

Corina Stratulat, Senior Policy Analyst, European Policy Centre (tbc)

Barbara Matias, Group for Legal and Political Studies
- 10h45 **Second Q&A Session**
- 11h00 **End of the Panel**