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Press release | 29.03.2012

EU-Kosovo

EP strengthens Kosovo’s European perspective

The European Parliament today adopted a report by Green rapporteur/draftsperson Ulrike Lunacek assessing Kosovo's progress towards the EU. Commenting after the vote, **Ulrike Lunacek** said:

"Today’s vote has underlined that a large and growing majority of MEPs support Kosovo’s independence (1). With this report, the EP is further strengthening Kosovo's EU perspective.

"The future of the Republic of Kosovo lies in the European Union; European governments need to do more to make this clear. The EP has today sent an important signal to this end and called on the EU to give Kosovo a real and palpable accession perspective, such as through a roadmap for visa liberalisation and continuous steps towards a Stabilisation and Association Agreement. To this end, we hope the Commission finishes its feasibility study by autumn 2012 at the latest. MEPs also urged the handful of recalcitrant EU member states, which have not yet recognised the state of Kosovo, to do so without delay.

"The report also stresses the importance of upgrading Kosovo’s representation within international cultural and heritage institutions and sports organisations, specifically referring to the International Olympic Committee with a view to enabling Kosovar athletes to participate in the upcoming London Olympic Games.

"On the other hand, the report makes clear that Kosovo needs to do more to fight corruption and organised crime and start delivering tangible results. Kosovo also needs to swiftly implement promised electoral reforms, bring perpetrators of electoral fraud to justice and to investigate allegations of fraud at different levels of society. The report also expresses the concern about political interference in the work of media and urges the authorities to take immediate steps to protect journalists from threats.

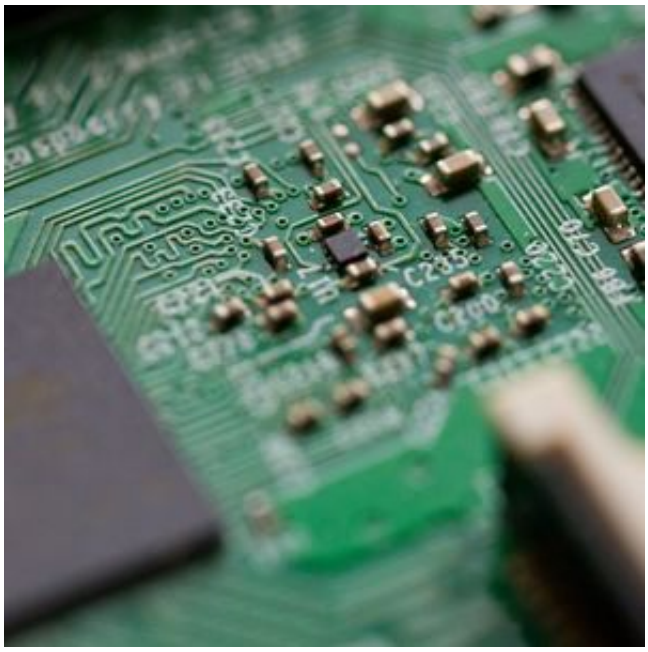
"The outcome of the dialogue between the Kosovar and Serbian governments is a source of encouragement, but recent disagreements on the question of Kosovo’s name have underlined that normal and positive relations between Kosovo and Serbia have to be worked on. The situation in northern Kosovo remains a cause for concern and all Serbian parallel structures should be dismantled. In particular, Serbian plans to organise local elections in northern Kosovo would be contrary to international law and the UN Security Council resolution 1244. On the other hand, the Kosovar government must do more to reach out to the Serbs living in the North of Kosovo."

(1) 475 in favour, 97 against, 76 abstentions. This represents a higher majority than previous years.

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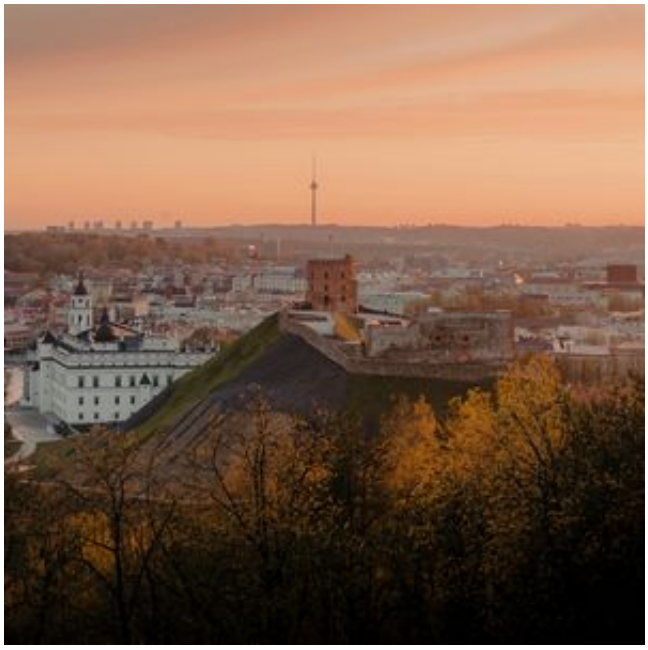
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Responsible MEPs



Ulrike Lunacek

EP Vice-President, Member

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