



KOSOVO

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EC slams Kosovo's poor reform record

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In its yearly report on the EU enlargement strategy, the European Commission has slammed Kosovo's poor reform record, warning that that "Kosovo is one of the main drug routes into Western Europe", and that organized crime is the biggest challenge.

The report claims that "relations between the Kosovo Albanians and Serbs remain strained," adding that "the biggest challenges facing Kosovo are the strengthening of the rule of law, suppressing corruption, a crackdown on organized crime, and improving dialogue between the communities."

It also stresses that "small progress has been made in the field of human rights and minority protection," and adds that, along with pressure on the freedom of expression and media, "the minorities and other endangered groups face the limitations of the freedom of association and gathering."

"Religious freedoms are not being fully implemented, attacks on churches and monasteries continue, and investigations have failed to yield any results," the European Commission says.

"Very small progress has been made in the return of the displaced and refugees. The integration and protection of those returning to Kosovo is not completely guaranteed," adds the report.

The analysis also underlines the fact that "the still weak and unstable judicial system has taken the initial legislative steps toward establishing the necessary structures" in order to exercise the authorities granted by UNMIK.

"Kosovo's economic progress is still being seriously hindered due to political uncertainties, the insufficient rule of law, limited production capacity, and weak infrastructure. The biggest cause for concern is the high level of unemployment," the EC warned.