



THE EU AND KOSOVO

Membership status: potential candidate

#WesternBalkans
#EUEnlargement



November 2023

The EU acknowledged the European perspective for all Western Balkan partners at the Thessaloniki European Council in June 2003. The EU-Kosovo Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) has been in force since April 2016. In December 2022, Kosovo applied for EU membership. Visa-free travel for Kosovo passport holders is expected to enter into effect on 1 January 2024.



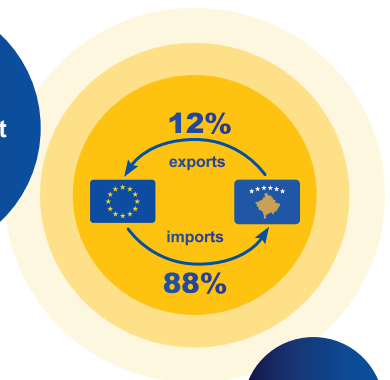
EU FUNDING

The EU is the largest provider of financial assistance to Kosovo. The EU is supporting the socio-economic development and fundamental reforms in Kosovo with financial and technical assistance through the **Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA)**.

For **2021-2023**, the IPA III funding for national programmes amounts to over **€231 million for Kosovo**. This includes the dedicated **€75 million** from the 2023 **Energy Support Package** immediate measures, 90% of which have already been disbursed to support vulnerable families and SMEs facing the rising energy prices. The actions are also aimed at supporting policy measures to accelerate the energy transition.

Since 1999, the EU has provided **€338 million** in loans for Kosovo through the European Investment Bank.

The EU is Kosovo's biggest trading partner



in 2022

Source: Eurostat



TRADE AND INVESTMENT

Total EU Foreign Direct Investment in Kosovo amounted to €2 billion in 2022.

Total volume of trade in goods with the EU was almost €2.7 billion in 2022.

KEY MILESTONES

MARCH 2011

EU-facilitated dialogue between Pristina and Belgrade starts

APRIL 2016

Stabilisation and Association Agreement enters into force

MAY 2016

Commission proposes visa-free travel for Kosovo

NOVEMBER 2016

First meeting of the EU-Kosovo Stabilisation and Association Council

JULY 2018

Commission confirms that Kosovo has fulfilled all outstanding visa liberalisation benchmarks

DECEMBER 2022

Application for EU membership

MARCH & APRIL 2023

Council and Parliament adopt regulation paving the way for visa liberalisation to start on 1 January 2024



HUMAN CAPITAL

The EU pays special attention to youth, education, and innovation. It helps the Western Balkans in implementing Youth Guarantee schemes to support youth employment.

5,500+ participants took part in exchanges between the EU and Kosovo in the areas of education, training, youth, and sport under ERASMUS+ (2014-2020).

The EU has provided €34 million in support to civil society (2014-2023).

364 young people received the opportunity to obtain a master's degree via 'Young Cells Scheme' grants for future public administration officials and experts.



ECONOMIC AND INVESTMENT PLAN

Launched in 2020, the Economic and Investment Plan (EIP) for the Western Balkans aims to mobilise up to €30 billion in cooperation with international financial institutions until 2027. Under the EIP for Kosovo, the EU has already mobilised **€940 million** in investments, out of which €312 million in grants.

The EIP flagship projects in public sector for Kosovo, endorsed between 2020 and 2023, support **sustainable transport** and **renewable energy**.

For instance, the investments help:

- rehabilitate and upgrade Pristina-Merdare highway section
- introduce solar energy as one of the sources for Pristina district heating network

Expected results 2023 - 2030



27 km of motorway built



165 km of railway lines rehabilitated



130 MW renewable energy generation capacity installed



Improved water and sanitation services for 1.3 million people

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