

2023 and 2024 Commission reports on Bosnia and Herzegovina

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The Committee on Foreign Affairs adopted the own-initiative report by Ondej KOLÁ on the 2023 and 2024 Commission reports on Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is a candidate country and the clear majority of its citizens aspires to Euro-Atlantic integration for sustainable peace, democracy and prosperity. 2025 marks the 30th anniversary of the Dayton Peace Agreement, which continues to form the foundation of BiH's institutional set-up and that was intended as a safeguard for the equality of its three constituent peoples. 30 years after the end of the war, BiH remains dysfunctional and finds itself again in a deep political and security crisis, with attempts at secession, and a high degree of corruption.

BiH's EU path is increasingly targeted by malign foreign actors, notably Russia and China, which exploit ethnic divisions and institutional fragility to obstruct reforms, undermine the constitutional order and erode public trust in the EU.

Commitment to EU accession

Members welcomed the European Council's decision to open accession negotiations with BiH in the context of the changed geopolitical reality following Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and welcomed the adoption of several key laws in the run-up to this decision but regretted that the legislative process has been marred by a lack of transparency and limited access for key stakeholders. The report noted the recent adoption of the Laws on Border Control and on Personal Data Protection and called for their thorough implementation. It called for preparations to establish the institutional and financial basis for this enlargement to ensure sustainable EU integration.

Members called on all political actors to uphold BiH's unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity and to refrain from all divisive rhetoric and acts, including secessionist rhetoric and acts, incitement to ethnic, religious and racial intolerance, denial of genocide and other war crimes, and the glorification of war crimes and their perpetrators.

The report welcomed BiH's formal full alignment with the EU's common foreign and security policy, including restrictive measures in response to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, and urged the effective implementation of these measures. Members strongly supports BiH's sustained aspirations towards Euro-Atlantic integration and NATO membership and called on all political actors to take concrete political action to achieve them. On the other hand, they remain concerned by malign foreign interference and disinformation campaigns by foreign actors in BiH, notably **Russia** and **China**, as well as their transmission through local media and political structures. Members also condemned the increase in **Iran's** malign influence in the country and in the Western Balkans, which poses a threat to security for the EU and its Member States.

Democracy and the rule of law

Members regretted that the BiH authorities have not been able to unite society or to create a just and functional system in the country, but rather have largely contributed to deepening divisions. The EU and its Member States are called on to initiate a **transparent and inclusive reform process** that would enable a sustainable transformation of the Dayton Peace Agreement into a constitution, fully in line with

European standards and principles, with a view to ensuring a functional, accountable, representative, and popularly legitimate governance system, to overcome ethno-nationalistic divisions and achieve sustainable progress on the path towards the EU.

The report noted the limited progress on justice reforms in Bosnia and Herzegovina, particularly in relation to the independence, professionalism, efficiency and accountability of the judicial system. It called for urgent measures to accelerate reforms in these areas, ensuring full alignment with EU standards and strengthening the capacity of the judiciary to effectively serve justice and uphold the rule of law.

Fundamental freedoms and human rights

Members strongly condemn discrimination, violence and hate speech against all minorities. They called for the effective prosecution of such incidents and urged BiH to promote and safeguard the human rights, non-discrimination and protection of all minorities. They called on BiH to guarantee the freedoms of assembly, association and expression, enabling the inclusion of civil society in policymaking.