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EULEX is fighting corruption in the government of Kosovo

On 7 June Kosovo's Prime Minister Hashim Thaci announced an offensive against corruption and appealed to all citizens and international institutions for cooperation. The declaration of the prime minister is a reaction to accelerating investigations into cases that involve two ministers from Thaci's government, conducted by the EU mission EULEX operating in Kosovo.

The EULEX mission is investigating Kosovar state administration offices within the framework of the international mandate that was extended to two more years on 8 June this year. The most serious charges made by EULEX concern the embezzlement of public funds at the Ministry of Education. EU prosecutors have been examining the case in the Ministry of Education for several months, which has already led to the resignations of a few aides and the closest colleagues of the minister Enver Hoxhaj. Another parallel investigation is being conducted into corruption and money laundering at the Ministry of Transport. In April this year EULEX searched the ministry and private estates of the minister Fatmir Limaj, a close aide of the Kosovar prime minister. Currently, the EU mission is involved in over a hundred investigations concerning Kosovar officials.

Prime Minister Thaci so far has been reproaching EULEX for excessive meddling into the state's affairs. The shift in the prime minister's position and an appeal for cooperation between the country and EULEX in fighting corruption are dictated by the importance of the charges presented and strong pressure from the EU and the US to crack down on corruption. Also, the president and right-wing opposition have been declaring their support for the EU mission in the hope that EULEX's investigations will contribute to the collapse of the leftist government of Thaci. Corruption and organised crime are the largest problems in Kosovo. <grosz, MarSz>