

Kosovo: old problems following a new election

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The snap election held in Kosovo on 7 June failed to produce a decisive outcome. It marked the third attempt at forming a new parliament in just eighteen months. This time, the election was triggered by the Assembly's failure to elect a head of state (see '[Kosovo: dissolution of parliament](#)'). The left-wing Self-Determination coalition (Albanian: Vetëvendosje) led by Prime Minister Albin Kurti emerged as the largest political force, securing 43% of the vote – 8 percentage points fewer than in December 2025 (see '[Snap elections in Kosovo: Kurti regains support](#)'). Although this result is insufficient for the party to govern alone, the level of support it obtained gives it the strongest prospects of forming a coalition government.

The parties originating from the Kosovo Liberation Army (UÇK) – namely the Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK) and the Alliance for the Future of Kosovo (AAK)–Initiative for Kosovo (NISMA) coalition – secured 21.1% and 7.2% of the vote respectively. The centre-right Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) secured the support of 17.6% of voters. Despite recording modest gains, the opposition lacks any realistic prospect of forming a majority coalition. Achieving this would require cooperation with the Serb List, the Belgrade-aligned party representing the Serb minority, which has ruled out such a possibility. Voter turnout stood at just 37%, more than 10 percentage points lower than in December 2025. The distribution of seats may still change following the counting of approximately 100,000 votes cast abroad, but even if all of these were secured by Self-Determination, the party would still fall short of an outright parliamentary majority.

Breaking the political deadlock that has persisted for more than a year will require agreement across existing political divides and concessions from multiple sides. At present, the most likely outcome is the formation of a coalition between Self-Determination and the LDK, which have previously governed together.

Commentary

- **The latest snap election once again failed to produce a decisive outcome.** The opposition, whose campaign centred on criticising Kurti's confrontational style of governance and emphasising its own international connections, was unable to improve its electoral performance significantly. Kurti, for his part, once again focused on security issues, including the development of Kosovo's armed forces, which drew criticism from Belgrade. The election was conducted without any major incidents, apart from an assault during the campaign on two candidates representing parties opposed to Self-Determination. The attack was condemned by all political groupings, and the perpetrators

were subsequently apprehended and punished.

- **The situation in northern Kosovo, which is inhabited predominantly by the Serb minority, constituted an important part of the election campaign.** For many years, this community has received active support from the government in Belgrade, which does not recognise Kosovo's independence. At the same time, Kurti's assertive policy towards the Serb population enjoys considerable support among the country's Albanian majority. Temporary sanctions imposed on Kosovo by the EU in response to this approach failed to diminish its popularity. During the campaign, the government assumed control of railway stations in Serb-majority municipalities that had previously been operated by Serbian Railways. There were also dismissals within Serbian-controlled minority institutions in the north of the country, allegedly on account of insufficient loyalty to pro-Belgrade political forces. In response to attempts to pressure employees of these institutions into supporting the Serb List backed by Aleksandar Vučić, the Kosovo Police arrested numerous individuals linked to the party.
- **The formation of a governing coalition and the election of a head of state remain essential for the stabilisation of Kosovo's political situation.** The centre-right Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) was the only political party to nominate its own presidential candidate during the campaign. Its nominee is Vjosa Osmani, who served as president from 2020 to 2026. Following the December election, Kurti ruled out supporting her re-election. Nevertheless, the LDK appears to be his only viable coalition partner and has further strengthened its negotiating position as a result of the decline in support for Self-Determination. At the same time, personal tensions between Kurti and Osmani are likely to complicate coalition talks.
- **EU institutions and member states have called on Kosovo's political parties to reach an agreement and form a stable governing majority.** Among those commenting on the issue were Marta Kos, the European Commissioner for Enlargement, as well as representatives of EU member states' embassies in Pristina. They have emphasised the need for a stable government capable of serving as a reliable partner for cooperation with the European Union. The new cabinet will also be required to implement the reforms demanded by the EU in order to secure funding under the Growth Plan for the Western Balkans (see '[Kosovo: dissolution of parliament](#)').
- **The United States has maintained a degree of distance from developments in Kosovo, despite being widely regarded as Pristina's most important ally.** During the election campaign, all major Kosovan parties, with the support of members of Congress from both major US parties, advocated accelerating Kosovo's accession to NATO. However, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio emphasised that the issue is not a priority for NATO members. Nor has Kosovo been included among the US-backed gas infrastructure projects planned for the region. This is most likely a reflection of the White House's reservations about Kurti, as well as its preference to engage with a stable government and a newly elected president. At the same time, the United States continues to advocate the normalisation of relations between Serbia and Kosovo, although such an outcome remains a distant prospect.