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Observation of the early elections to the Assembly of Kosovo* (7 June 2026)

Election observation report[1]
Ad hoc Committee of the Bureau
Rapporteur: Mr Iulian BULAI, Romania, Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe

1. Introduction

1. Following the elections to the Assembly of Kosovo held on 28 December 2025, the Self-Determination Party (Vetëvendosje, LVV) of Prime Minister Albin Kurti won a majority of seats. However, the political parties failed to elect the President of Kosovo within the constitutional deadline. As a result, the Assembly was dissolved on 28 April 2026. On 5 May 2026, Kreshnik Radoniqi, Chairperson of the Central Election Commission (CEC), invited the Parliamentary Assembly to observe the early parliamentary elections scheduled for 7 June 2026.

2. The Bureau of the Assembly set up a cross-party ad hoc committee of eleven members to observe the elections and appointed me as Chairperson of the Delegation and Ms Maria Syrengela (Greece, EPP/CD) as Vice-Chairperson. The composition of the ad hoc committee (referred to as the "PACE delegation") is outlined in Appendix 1. The Parliamentary Assembly was the only international organisation observing these elections.

3. The PACE delegation was in Kosovo from 4 to 8 June 2026. During its two-day briefings (see Appendix 2), the delegation met with the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Diaspora, the Chairperson of the CEC, the Chairperson of the Electoral Complaints and Appeals Panel (ECAP), the Chairperson of the Independent Media Commission, leaders and representatives of political parties, representatives of the international community, civil society and media representatives, as well as ambassadors and chargés d'affaires of countries represented in the delegation and from the Quint countries. After election day, the delegation published a statement (Appendix 3).

4. The PACE delegation welcomed the orderly and smooth conduct of the elections, which took place without major incidents. It noted, however, the context of widespread voter frustration and fatigue, which was reflected in a subdued campaign and a significant decline in voter turnout. The delegation urged all elected representatives to engage in genuine constructive dialogue to promptly elect the President and advance the country's democratic processes.

5. The PACE delegation expresses its appreciation to the Kosovo authorities, the Council of Europe Office in Pristina, and all electoral stakeholders who met with the delegation. It also thanks the civil society representatives who contributed to the mission's work. With limited international election observation, the role of domestic observers proved essential. The findings and reports of Democracy in Action (DiA)[2] – a civil society coalition – and other NGOs informed the preparation of this report.

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1. The report is drawn up under the responsibility of the rapporteur.
*Throughout this document, all reference to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.
2. See the "Preliminary Statement on the Early Elections for the Assembly of Kosovo" published by Democracy in Action on 9 June 2026 and subsequent monitoring reports on the early elections.

2. Political context

6. The political crisis leading to the June 2026 elections was rooted in the failure of the Assembly to elect a President of Kosovo within the constitutional deadline. According to the Constitution, the Assembly is required to elect a President 30 days before the incumbent's term ends. President Vjosa Osmani-Sadriu's mandate expired on 5 April 2026. The election of the President requires a majority of all 120 Assembly members (80 votes) in the first and second rounds (a simple majority in the third round between the two candidates who received the highest number of votes in the second round). However, following a 2012 ruling of the Constitutional Court, a two-thirds quorum is required for the first and second rounds of voting.

7. Incumbent President Vjosa Osmani-Sadriu sought a second term, but her candidature was not supported by LVV this time. A member of Adem Jashari's family (a symbol of the Kosovo Albanian struggle for independence) declined Mr Kurti's invitation to run for the position of President. The ruling party and the opposition then disagreed over who should be put forward as a candidate. LVV considered that its electoral win entitled it to nominate two candidates from within its own ranks, namely Foreign Minister Glauk Konjufca and LVV MP Fatmire Mulhaxha Kollcaku. The opposition, on the other hand, insisted that the President should be a consensual figure and argued that the ruling party should not hold all major political offices – specifically the President of the Assembly, the Prime Minister, and the President of Kosovo. A round of negotiations, in which Mr Kurti offered the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) a government partnership with LVV and other partners, including the posts of deputy prime minister, foreign minister and three other ministries, proved unsuccessful.

8. Following these unsuccessful discussions, opposition parties boycotted a key session, denying a quorum and stalling the vote. On 5 March, President Osmani dissolved the Assembly, but the Constitutional Court ruled that this dissolution had no legal effect and gave the Assembly 34 more days to elect a president. The Assembly missed the 28 April deadline, triggering automatic dissolution and new elections within 45 days. Since the expiration of President Osmani's mandate, Albulena Haxhiu (LVV), elected President of the Assembly on 11 February 2026, has served as acting President.

9. The main political parties competing in the June 2026 elections were: Vetëvendosje (LVV); the Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK); the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK); the Alliance for the Future of Kosovo (AAK); the Social Democratic Initiative (NISMA); and Srpska Lista, the main party representing the Kosovo Serb community and closely aligned with the Serbian Government. In the December 2025 elections, LVV had won 51.10% of the vote (57 seats), PDK 20.19% (22 seats), LDK 13.24% (15 seats), and AAK 5.50% (6 seats).

10. Citizens were called to the polls for the third time in sixteen months, following the elections of 9 February 2025 and 28 December 2025. The campaign was characterised by lower levels of civic mobilisation and a widespread perception that the elections were more likely to prolong the political crisis than to resolve the institutional deadlock. This sentiment was ultimately confirmed by a dramatic decline in voter turnout.

11. The previous elections saw an investigation into an alleged large-scale manipulation of preferential votes discovered by the CEC in December 2025, prompting PACE to conduct a post-election mission in April 2026. The delegation recalls that these investigations must be completed promptly and transparently, those responsible identified and brought to justice, and structural measures taken to prevent recurrence. The credibility of Kosovo's electoral administration depends on the justice system's ability and willingness to address such abuses effectively. The delegation was informed by the Chairperson of the CEC that additional oversight measures had been put in place in the counting centres. An automatic recount (of about 8% of all ballot papers) would be conducted to check whether discrepancies were detected, in which case a full recount would be undertaken.

12. Ahead of the 7 June 2026 elections, seven people were arrested in Gračanica/Graçanicë on suspicion of violation of the principle of free voting, following complaints by Kosovo Serbs who reported feeling intimidated by Srpska Lista representatives in Kosovo in connection with their employment in the so-called Serbia-funded "parallel institutions", notably health clinics, schools and municipal administrations. EULEX expressed serious concern, noting that the arrests appeared to have preceded the investigation and that proving voter influence would be difficult, assessing the arrests as potentially politically motivated. Daily protests were held in Gračanica/Graçanicë, Lipjan/Lipljan and Sushicë/Sušica. The episode highlighted the continuing fragility of inter-community relations and the tensions surrounding the Serb community's participation in Kosovo's electoral processes.

3. Electoral framework, campaign and media environment

3.1. Legal framework

13. The 7 June 2026 elections were conducted under the same legal framework as the December 2025 elections, with no amendments to primary electoral legislation. The legal framework, electoral system, core procedures and mechanisms for the protection of voting rights remained unchanged. The legal framework as a whole, including the persistent shortcomings identified in earlier PACE reports – concerning campaign finance transparency, media ownership disclosure, the strengthening of electoral administration and the protection of out-of-country voting – has been examined in detail in the PACE election observation report on the December 2025 elections (Doc. 16380). To recall a few main features of Kosovo's electoral system:

– The Assembly of Kosovo (Kuvendi i Kosovës) comprises 120 seats, with representatives elected every four years through a proportional representation system with open lists. Kosovo uses a single national electoral district, with a 5% threshold of the total vote required for parties to gain representation. Non-majority communities are guaranteed 20 reserved seats: ten are allocated to representatives of the Kosovo Serb community, while the remaining ten are divided among other non-majority groups as follows: 3 seats for the Bosniak community, 2 seats for the Turkish community, 1 seat each for the Gorani, Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities, and 1 additional seat awarded to either the Roma, Ashkali, or Egyptian community based on which group's list receives the highest level of support.

– Voters select a party list and can also indicate their preferred individual candidates on the same list, with up to ten preferential votes allowed. These preferential votes are counted at the municipal counting centres, which serve a dual function: they verify the party-level results forms completed at polling stations after the ballots are counted, and they enter the candidate preferences into the results system.

– Out-of-country voting is provided for by the Law on General Elections, as amended in 2023 and further detailed in the 2024 regulations.

14. The present report therefore limits itself to noting the regulatory changes adopted by the CEC ahead of these elections and the new concerns they raised. In the period leading up to the elections, the CEC adopted amendments to four electoral regulations: on out-of-country voting, the administration of the Counting and Results Centre, voting and counting procedures at polling stations, and the regulation of election observation. Most amendments were technical and drew lessons from recent processes.

15. However, Electoral Regulation No. 04/2026 on Election Observers raised serious concerns: by substantially expanding documentation and information requirements for civil society organisations seeking accreditation and granting the CEC new discretionary assessment powers not clearly derived from the Law on General Elections, it created barriers to independent observation and raised concerns regarding legal certainty and predictability. In practice, last-minute changes to the regulation complicated the accreditation of civil society observers ahead of election day. Additionally, the CEC adopted a decision allowing out-of-country voters to use expired identification documents, which was subsequently annulled by the ECAP as inconsistent with the applicable legal framework.

3.2. Election administration, voter and candidates registration, out-of-country voting

16. Despite tight deadlines, the elections were technically well organised. The CEC successfully carried out the vast majority of electoral operations within the prescribed timelines: compilation of the voters' list (2 092 174 eligible voters, 15 884 more than in December 2025), certification of political entities and candidates, organisation of voting within and outside Kosovo, appointment of election officials and online publication of results. Unlike previous processes, the CEC's work was characterised by fewer political disputes and a more functional, consensus-based decision-making process. The CEC operated with one vacant seat due to a dispute over which political party should receive the additional seat allocated by the President.

17. A persistent structural weakness concerns the four Serb-majority municipalities in the North. The CEC again failed to appoint regular municipal election officers in these municipalities. The positions were filled by Kosovo Albanian officials from the Ministry of Internal Affairs with limited Serbian-language skills, appointed through a written procedure. The delegation was told by the authorities that candidates from non-majority communities did not meet the eligibility criteria to be members of the municipal election officers. While this enabled the conduct of electoral operations, it does not constitute a sustainable solution. Equitable ethnic representation in local election commissions, particularly in municipalities with non-majority communities, remains an outstanding recommendation.

18. Candidate registration was conducted inclusively. After the 11-day submission window, 23 entities applied – 18 parties, 3 coalitions, 1 civic initiative and 1 independent – nominating 917 candidates (603 men, 314 women). The CEC deserves credit for the inclusive certification of all party and candidate lists, including those submitted by the main Kosovo Serb party. Candidates were vetted under Article 30 of the Law on General Elections. The Kosovo Institute for Law noted that 25 certified candidates were involved in criminal cases. An appeal by Srpska Lista against the certification of the “For Freedom, Justice and Survival” list for seats reserved for Kosovo Serbs was rejected by both the ECAP and the Supreme Court. The courts determined that the Constitution reserves these seats for parties that declare they represent the Kosovo Serb community, not necessarily for individuals who are ethnic Serbs. On 4 August 2026, Srpska Lista announced that it had appealed the Supreme Court's decision to the Constitutional Court.

19. The reduction in the number of complaints registered by the CEC and ECAP signals genuine administrative progress compared to previous elections. Electoral dispute resolution mechanisms functioned effectively, with ECAP and the Supreme Court adjudicating complaints within legally prescribed deadlines and demonstrating a high degree of professionalism and consistency. As of 5 June, ECAP had received 17 complaints, issued 9 decisions (5 upheld, 4 rejected) and imposed fines totalling 12 100 euros, a positive trend compared to previous processes. The ECAP decision to fine LVV 6 000 euros for the participation of children in two election rallies in Podujevë/Podujevo and Lipjan, following complaints lodged by the NGO Kosovo Democratic Institute, was upheld by the Supreme Court, which stated that the responsibility of the political entity is not excluded by the fact that the minors were accompanied by their parents or by whether the initiative for participation came from the minors themselves.

20. Out-of-country voting continues to be a significant component of Kosovo's electoral process, reflecting the large diaspora's commitment to political participation. For the June 2026 elections, a record 142 000 applications were received, with 131 800 voters registered – the highest number since 2021. Of these, 100 522 registered to vote by post, 3 502 via the CEC mailbox in Kosovo, and 27 776 in person at diplomatic missions. In-person voting at 30 diplomatic missions (47 polling stations) took place on 6 June 2026, with 22 860 of the 27 776 registered voters casting ballots, representing a turnout of 82.46%.

21. Unlike previous electoral processes, out-of-country voting was not accompanied by major political disputes. However, several concerns persisted. The CEC's decision to allow voter identification using expired identification documents was annulled by ECAP as contrary to applicable law, yet instances of voters using expired IDs were still observed on election day at 28.6% of polling stations, indicating inconsistent enforcement. Moreover, photographs and videos showing marked ballots were posted on social media, raising concerns regarding ballot secrecy and the integrity of out-of-country voting, including the possibility of organised or influenced voting. The State Prosecutor and Kosovo Police received reports of such cases and initiated investigations. The PACE delegation reiterates the need to strengthen safeguards for ballot secrecy and to review the modalities of out-of-country voting to guarantee electoral integrity.

3.3. Campaign environment and financing

22. The ten-day campaign (28 May – 7 June 2026) was conducted in a competitive and generally calm environment, with no serious incidents. However, it was characterised by an unusual degree of subdued activity: lower civic mobilisation, limited participation in public events, recycled political offerings, and a lack of substantive debate on policy proposals. Campaign messaging focused primarily on economic and social issues – wage and pension increases, social assistance, infrastructure and energy – with little detail on costs, financing or implementation plans. The campaign was dominated by party leaders and large-scale rallies, with few direct exchanges with citizens or head-to-head debates.

23. A key concern identified by the PACE delegation and domestic observers was the unequal playing field. The caretaker government made decisions, on the eve of the elections, to provide one-off financial payments to various categories of citizens and to subsidise airline routes for the diaspora. The timing of these measures was widely perceived as intended to benefit the ruling party. The PACE delegation heard from several interlocutors that these decisions constituted a misuse of administrative resources and blurred the line between public policy and electoral interests. Such conduct gives an advantage to incumbents and undermines the perception of fair competition, even when the decisions may have an arguable public-interest justification.

24. The absence of direct debates between candidates for Prime Minister was particularly notable. This limited voters' ability to compare political alternatives through direct exchange and deprived the campaign of substantive democratic content. Political discourse was more moderate than in recent elections, though instances of inflammatory language, labelling and personal attacks were observed.

25. Campaign finance transparency remains an area requiring significant improvement. DiA monitored political party spending on social media advertising and identified expenditure exceeding 100 000 euros on Meta platforms during the final week of the campaign alone. Political parties' post-election financial reports will be assessed against these figures. The legal framework governing party and campaign financing – including the transparency of financial transactions and the declaration of assets by candidates – remains insufficiently robust, as noted in previous PACE recommendations. Civil society organisations should be guaranteed access to the detailed financial transactions of political parties, and the CEC should have adequate powers and resources to enforce financial disclosure requirements.

3.4. Disinformation, online campaigning and foreign interference

26. Artificial intelligence (AI) was increasingly weaponised for political disinformation during the campaign. Dozens of AI-generated images, manipulated videos and fabricated statements targeting candidates from across the political spectrum flooded social media. The fact-checking platform Krypometer reported fabricated posts depicting candidates as religious extremists, foreign agents or persons of dubious moral character. Such content targeted candidates from all major parties, including LVV, LDK, PDK and AAK. DiA monitoring identified 56 online incidents in the first five days of the campaign alone, of which 35 constituted hate speech, with almost half targeting women politicians. In this context, the role of ECAP in protecting public discourse from hate speech was praised by interlocutors, as was the independence of its judges.

27. Women politicians were disproportionately targeted. Former President Vjosa Osmani was among the frequent targets of AI-driven falsehoods and online abuse. The PACE delegation notes with serious concern that women in public life are increasingly subjected to digital violence, including image manipulation, deepfakes, blackmail and sexist language. Proposed amendments to the Criminal Code to criminalise cyberviolence, introduced in 2024, have not been adopted, leaving an important legislative gap.

28. The PACE delegation received several reports of interference from Belgrade seeking to influence the vote of Kosovo Serbs in favour of a specific party. Its extent and impact on the election results were assessed as limited though. However, this remains a matter of particular concern: the integrity of the vote for community-reserved seats depends on voters being able to exercise free choice, free from external pressure. Kosovo has limited institutional capacity to address these threats effectively, and the absence of adequate responses to remove harmful content remains a structural gap. The delegation calls for stronger co-operation between electoral authorities, media regulators, digital platforms and civil society to address disinformation and foreign interference in a rights-compliant manner.

29. Social media served as one of the main channels of political communication. DiA monitored approximately 500 social media profiles, including the official accounts of the main political parties and all their candidates. During the final week of the campaign alone, sponsored content expenditure exceeding 100 000 euros was identified on Meta platforms. The campaign confirmed the growing importance of online platforms in electoral competition, while also highlighting persistent challenges related to transparency of digital advertising and the dissemination of unverified information. Around 6% of comments on 152 monitored portals contained hateful content.

3.5. Media environment

30. Kosovo's media landscape is diverse. The delegation met with the Chairperson of the Independent Media Commission (IMC) and representatives of the Radio Television of Kosovo (RTK), the Association of Kosovo Journalists, Kosova Press and the media fact-checking organisation Hibrid. Overall, the media provided political contestants with broad opportunities to present their programmes. DiA monitoring did not identify any systematic restrictions on political contestants' access to major media outlets.

31. However, important shortcomings were noted. Media coverage and public debates frequently focused on campaign dynamics and political rhetoric rather than on analysing policy programmes and concrete proposals. Media formats often featured single-party or single-candidate shows, with few direct debates between contestants. Participation in television debates was roughly 80% men and 20% women, reflecting the broader marginalisation of women in campaign communication. No direct debate between candidates for Prime Minister took place, which the PACE delegation considers a significant democratic deficit.

32. The PACE delegation received reports of AI-generated videos, misinformation and fake accounts that could influence voters' informed decision making and expressed serious concern about Kosovo's limited institutional capacity to address these threats and the lack of adequate responses to remove harmful content.

Legislation on media ownership disclosure has not yet been adopted, a longstanding recommendation of PACE and international observers. The IMC's role in addressing online content remains limited. These gaps must be addressed as a matter of priority.

33. The campaign unfolded in an overall context marked by a pluralistic media landscape, low levels of physical violence against journalists, and broad legislative alignment with European and international standards, but also by a clear decline in media freedom. This decline resulted from the adoption of a media law – later rejected as unconstitutional – which would have increased political control over the IMC, the insufficient funding of, and pressure on, RTK, as well as a sustained increase in the verbal targeting and denigration of journalists by ruling party politicians. These are the principal factors behind this assessment, as noted recently by the European Platform for Journalists.

3.6. Inclusivity in the electoral process

34. Women's representation showed limited progress. Of 917 certified candidates, 314 were women (34%), slightly above the legal minimum of 30% on party lists, and broadly consistent with the December 2025 elections. However, women's presence in televised debates and media coverage remained significantly lower than that of men – approximately 20% of TV debate participants. Women's representation at the mayoral level remains strikingly low: only one of over 200 mayoral candidates in the October 2025 local elections was a woman elected as mayor. The PACE delegation notes the inconsistency between the Law on Gender Equality, which requires at least 50% representation, and the Law on General Elections, which requires only 30% on candidate lists; this matter has been referred to the Constitutional Court by the Ombudsperson but has not yet been resolved.

35. Accessibility for voters with disabilities remained inadequate. Approximately 19% of polling centres did not provide adequate conditions for easy access by persons with physical disabilities, limiting their ability to vote independently and with dignity. The delegation welcomes the introduction – for the first time – of the possibility for voters aged 80 and above to vote from home, as a positive step towards more inclusive voting arrangements, but urges that physical accessibility at polling stations be addressed more systematically.

4. Election Day

36. On election day, PACE teams were deployed across Pristina and 17 other locations throughout Kosovo, namely Gjakova/Đakovica, Gjilan/Gnjilane, Gračanica/Graçanicë, Kamenicë/Kamenica, Klinë/Klina, Leposavić/Leposaviq, Lipjan/Lipljan, Mamushë/Mamuša, Theranda/Suva Reka, Mitrovica, Severna Mitrovica/ Mitrovicë e Veriut, Mitrovicë e Jugut/Južna Mitrovica, Parteš/Partesh, Pejë/Peć, Podujevë/Podujevo, Prizren and Ranilug/Ranillug.

37. In the limited number of polling stations observed, the PACE delegation found the elections to have been conducted smoothly and professionally. Electoral officers demonstrated competence, and the atmosphere was calm and orderly, with polling stations effectively managed by representatives of both majority and non-majority communities. The delegation commends the CEC and polling station staff for the overall orderly management of election day.

38. Language difficulties caused by the inadequate representation of the community forming the majority in certain municipalities created friction in a small number of polling stations. Municipal election officers in the four northern, Serb-majority municipalities lacked adequate Serbian-language skills. Electoral materials should be fully accessible in both official languages and in other non-majority languages, in accordance with the Law on the Use of Languages.

39. DiA observers found that polling stations opened on time in the vast majority of cases: only 1.6% opened late, primarily due to absent polling staff or equipment issues. Problems related to camera functioning or placement were reported in 2% of polling stations, in some cases raising concerns regarding ballot secrecy.

40. One of the most widespread issues on election day was voters' difficulty in locating their assigned polling station, reported in approximately two-thirds of polling stations, though the number of cases was limited in most instances. Ballot photographing was reported in 39 cases. Instances of voters being present behind the voting screen in small groups were reported in 15.8% of polling stations. The use of expired identification documents was observed at 28.6% of polling stations, despite the ECAP ruling. A positive development was the significant reduction in assisted voting, attributed to stricter enforcement of applicable rules, representing a concrete improvement in the integrity of the vote compared to previous elections.

41. Closing was generally orderly: 93.2% of polling stations closed between 19:00 and 19:15, and voters still in line at closing time were generally allowed to vote. DiA observed the counting of votes at municipal counting centres, while 100 field observers, supported by legal expert teams, monitored the counting and results centre. Measures taken to prevent manipulation in the counting of preferential votes – a significant problem in the December 2025 elections – were noted by the PACE delegation. The presence of domestic election observers at municipal counting centres is seen as key to safeguarding electoral transparency and integrity at this critical stage.

42. Voter turnout (37,03%) was significantly lower than in recent Assembly's elections, compared to approximately 45% in December 2025 and 46.44% in February 2025.

5. International and domestic election observation

43. The CEC accredited a total of 16 549 observers: 14 931 for 15 political entities; 796 from 13 local NGOs; 130 from four international organisations (i.e. PACE, the International Observers Program, the Institut de Coopération et Développement and the National Democratic Institute); 457 from 39 local media; 78 from 23 international media; 90 from 6 diplomatic missions; and 67 from one local institution.

44. Democracy in Action (DiA), an umbrella civil society organisation, deployed approximately 750 volunteers, including 500 stationed observers, 50 mobile observers and 50 at the Data Centre, providing the most comprehensive domestic observation coverage of the process. The delegation commends DiA's professionalism and commitment and stresses that independent domestic observation is an irreplaceable safeguard of democratic integrity.

45. However, the new CEC Regulation on Election Observers (No. 04/2026) raised concerns. By expanding accreditation criteria and granting the CEC discretionary assessment powers beyond those established by law, it created unnecessary barriers to independent observation. Last-minute changes to the regulation also caused practical difficulties for civil society organisations seeking accreditation. The delegation calls on the authorities to review this regulation to ensure that the legal framework fully enables, rather than restricts, independent domestic election observation at all stages of the process, including the counting of preferential votes.

6. Post-electoral outlook

46. Following the counting of postal votes, conditional ballots and ballots cast by voters with special needs, Vetëvendosje (LVV) remained the strongest political force in the Assembly, securing 382 865 votes, or 47.13% of the total, and 53 seats. The Kosovo Democratic Party (PDK) maintained 22 seats with 157 893 votes, or 19.44%, while the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK), joined by former President Vjosa Osmani, gained three seats. Votes cast in diplomatic missions overwhelmingly favoured LVV, which received 83.28% of the votes cast in diplomatic missions and 72,94% of postal votes: votes from the diaspora have contributed an additional five seats to Vetevendosje.[3]

47. On 27 June, the CEC announced the final results, stating that the recount of 185 polling stations had revealed only minor discrepancies, mainly due to the recategorisation of ballots or human error, and did not justify further recounts. However, several complaints were filed with the ECAP, including by PDK candidates Bekim Haxhiu and Qëndrim Kryeziu, who challenged the accuracy of the results and requested a full recount. Srpska Lista also contested the results, alleging irregularities affecting mandates reserved for the Serb community, while the New Democratic Party (NDS) filed two further complaints concerning alleged voting irregularities.

48. On 8 July, the CEC certified the results of the elections after the Supreme Court rejected the five appeals. The results are as follows:

Party	9 February 2025		28 December 2028		7 June 2026	
	Percentage of votes	Seats	Percentage of votes	Seats	Percentage of votes	Seats
Vetëvendosje (LVV)	42,30 %	48	51,10%	57	47.13%	53
Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK)	20,95 %	24	20,19%	22	19.24%	22

3. Results of the postal voting, out-of-country voting and special needs available on the CEC website

Party	9 February 2025		28 December 2028		7 June 2026	
	Percentage of votes	Seats	Percentage of votes	Seats	Percentage of votes	Seats
Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK)	18,27 %	20	13,24%	15	16,69%	18
Alliance for the Future of Kosovo (AAK)	7,06 %	8	5,50%	6	6.74%	7
Srpska Lista	4.26%	9	4,49%	9	5.2%	9
For Freedom, Justice and Survival	0.44%	1	0.51%	1	0.67%	1
Turkish Democratic Party of Kosovo	0.51%	1	0,57%	2	0.70%	2
Vakat Coalition	0.37%	1	0.42%	1	0,48%	1
New Democratic Party (NDS)	0.44%	1	0.41%	1	0,33%	1
New Democratic Initiative of Kosovo	0.50%	1	0.29%	1	0,43%	1
Social Democratic Union	0.32%	1	0.27%	1	0,33%	1
Egyptian Liberal Party	0.35%	1	0.24%	1	0,27%	1
Ashkali Social Democratic Party	0.23%	1	0.22%	1	0,32%	1
Unique Gorani Party	0.18%	1	0.16%	1	0,20%	1
Progressive Movement of Kosovar Roma (United Roma party of Kosovo)		1	0.12%	1	0,11%	1
TOTAL		120	100%	120	100%	120

49. Under the Constitution, a constitutive session of the National Assembly must be held within 30 days of certification, during which the Speaker and five Deputy Speakers are to be elected. The Assembly was convened on 6 August. It has 60 days to elect a President.

50. The newly elected Assembly faced significant delays in its constitution and missed the 7 August deadline set for full formation. On that date, Acting Prime Minister Kurti requested that the session be suspended to allow further negotiations on securing broader political support, particularly for the election of the President. The move provoked strong reactions from opposition parties, including disruptive incidents. Protracted negotiations between LVV and LDK failed, however, to produce an agreement. Bekim Sejdiu – a former Constitutional Court judge, diplomat and adviser to then-President Vjosa Osmani – who had been proposed as the presidential candidate on 31 August, withdrew his candidacy on 15 September amid internal disagreements within LDK. On 13 September, Albulena Haxhiu was re-elected President of the Assembly, although only four of the five Deputy Presidents were elected. The PDK nominee for the remaining position withdrew after LVV members announced that they would not support her. Despite concerns that the Assembly had not been constituted in accordance with constitutional procedures, the President declared it constituted and mandated Albin Kurti to form a government. The “Kurti 4” government was subsequently elected with 62 votes in favour and 8 against, without the participation of PDK, LDK or AAK. PDK challenged both the constitution of the Assembly and the legitimacy of the government before the Constitutional Court. On 23 September, the Constitutional Court ruled that neither the constitution of the Assembly nor the election of the government had violated the Constitution. It nevertheless confirmed that the constitutional 30-day deadline for constituting the Assembly had triggered the subsequent deadlines. The 60-day deadline for electing the President therefore runs from 8 August to 6 October. Failure to elect a President by that date would result in the dissolution of the Assembly and the organisation of new elections within 45 days. These developments took place against the backdrop of the convictions of former senior Kosovo officials Hashim Thaçi, Jakup Krasniqi, Kadri Veseli and Rexhep Selimi by the Kosovo Specialist Chambers, all of which have been appealed.

7. Conclusions and recommendations

51. The early parliamentary elections of 7 June 2026 were conducted in a calm, orderly and professional manner, without major incidents. The CEC administered the elections effectively, electoral dispute resolution mechanisms functioned well, and voters were able to exercise their right to vote freely. The delegation commends the people of Kosovo for their continued commitment to democracy under difficult circumstances.

52. At the same time, the elections revealed persistent structural challenges: an unequal playing field resulting from the misuse of administrative resources by the caretaker government; voter fatigue and declining turnout; a campaign lacking substantive policy debate and direct exchanges between leading candidates; growing threats from AI-generated disinformation, hate speech and digital violence; inadequate protection for women candidates in the online environment; and continuing shortcomings in accessibility, out-of-country voting safeguards and ethnic representation in election administration. These challenges must be addressed comprehensively and without further delay.

53. The dramatic decline in voter turnout – from around 44-47% in recent elections to approximately 37% – sends a clear signal of public disillusionment with the political class's inability to compromise; it should be a wake-up call for all political actors. Democracy requires coalition building, not zero-sum victories. If elections are perceived as leading to the same stalemate, public confidence in the political process may weaken. The PACE delegation urged all parties to engage in genuinely constructive dialogue, put the country's democratic stability above short-term partisan interests, and advance Kosovo's Euro-Atlantic path.

54. While these elections slightly changed the political balance in the Assembly, they did not substantially alter the political arithmetic: the election of the President of Kosovo, a constitutional imperative that demands a qualified two-thirds majority, requires political compromise. Elections alone cannot resolve a deeper political deadlock. Vetëvendosje/LVV remains the strongest force, but without a clear governing majority, while the main opposition parties also failed to create an obvious alternative majority. This suggests that Kosovo's political crisis is not simply electoral, but institutional and related to the functioning of the political parties: repeated elections may reproduce the same balance of power unless parties become more willing to negotiate, compromise and form stable coalitions.

55. On the positive side, the decrease in electoral complaints and the smooth counting process – with the CEC's recount of 185 polling stations reportedly finding only minor discrepancies, mainly linked to human error or the reclassification of ballots – show that the electoral administration, supported by appeal procedures carried out by ECAP and the Supreme Court, is key to fostering trust in the electoral process. These electoral dispute resolution mechanisms should be strengthened.

56. The key challenge is therefore not only to organise credible elections, but also to ensure that the results can produce functional institutions. The period after certification – including the election of the Assembly Speaker, Deputy Speakers and President – is crucial. If political parties remain unable to reach agreement, Kosovo risks entering another cycle of institutional paralysis, coalition bargaining and possible early elections. The persistence of an institutional vacuum and consecutive elections is damaging to democratic governance, public trust and Kosovo's Euro-Atlantic aspirations.

57. Recalling the previous recommendations made by PACE observers which remain valid, the PACE delegation recommends that the competent authorities of Kosovo undertake the following measures, in consultation with the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission) and other relevant Council of Europe bodies:

57.1. Election administration and legal framework

– Ensure the de-politicisation of the CEC so that the election management body not only acts impartially but is also perceived as impartial by all electoral stakeholders.

– Improve the continuous education and training of election officials, commissioners and polling station workers.

– Update the voters list on the basis of accurate and current data, ensuring timely removal of ineligible persons.

– Ensure equitable ethnic representation in local and municipal election commissions, especially in municipalities with non-majority communities; provide all electoral materials in both official languages and in other community languages.

– Ensure that CEC regulations remain strictly within the mandate conferred by the Law on General Elections; review Electoral Regulation No. 04/2026 on Election Observers to remove provisions that unduly restrict independent civil society accreditation.

57.2. Integrity of the electoral process

– Complete the ongoing criminal investigations into the large-scale manipulation of preferential votes identified in the December 2025 elections; identify and hold responsible those who engaged in such manipulation; and adopt structural reforms to the counting and certification process to prevent recurrence.

– Further review procedures for the counting of preferential votes and take appropriate legislative and administrative measures to guarantee the transparency and integrity of the counting process, in accordance with the Venice Commission's Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters.

– Investigate all allegations of voter intimidation, including the cases arising from the Gračanica/ Graçanicë arrests, and ensure that Kosovo Serb voters and all minority community voters can exercise their right to vote free from pressure, manipulation or influence.

57.3. Misuse of administrative resources

– Adopt explicit rules prohibiting the use of public resources, government communications and public benefit decisions for partisan advantage during electoral periods; ensure that government action during campaign periods is strictly neutral, necessary and proportionate.

– Establish independent oversight and effective sanctions for misuse of administrative resources in the electoral context, including the use of public funds for measures with clear electoral impact announced on the eve of elections.

57.4. Campaign finance

– Strengthen the legal framework on party and campaign finance transparency, including timely and comprehensive disclosure of income and expenditure, including online advertising.

– Require candidates to declare assets in full and ensure civil society organisations can access the detailed financial transaction records of political parties.

57.5. Media, disinformation and digital campaigning

– Adopt legislation on media ownership disclosure without further delay.

– Strengthen institutional capacity to identify, respond to and remove AI-generated disinformation, deepfakes and harmful content targeting candidates and voters; ensure effective co-operation between the IMC, ECAP, digital platforms and civil society monitors in electoral periods.

– Adopt amendments to the Criminal Code to criminalise cyberviolence, including cyberstalking, incitement to hatred and non-consensual distribution of intimate images including AI-generated content, as proposed in 2024.

– Establish a non-partisan, transparent mechanism for assessing and responding to foreign interference in the electoral process, in particular attempts to influence the vote of non-majority communities.

57.6. Out-of-country voting

– Review the modalities of out-of-country voting to secure equality of suffrage and guarantee electoral integrity; strengthen safeguards against ballot photographing, the sharing of voted ballots on social media, and organised or influenced voting.

– Ensure consistent enforcement of voter identification requirements at polling stations both within and outside Kosovo.

57.7. Gender equality and inclusivity

– Resolve the inconsistency between the Law on Gender Equality (50% representation requirement) and the Law on General Elections (30% minimum quota on candidate lists), in line with the pending referral to the Constitutional Court.

– Further encourage women's participation in political life, including by addressing the "double gender gap" in both party nominations and media coverage, and by ensuring that the justice system addresses hate speech cases effectively.

– Improve accessibility for voters with disabilities at polling stations, ensuring consistent interpretation of legal provisions and systematic rather than merely exceptional accommodation.

58. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe stands ready to assist Kosovo in further improving its electoral framework and strengthening the capacity of all election stakeholders, in close co-operation with the Venice Commission and other Council of Europe bodies and international partners.

Appendix 1 – Composition of the ad hoc committee

Based on the proposals by the political groups of the Assembly, the ad hoc committee was composed as follows:

Chairperson: Mr Iulian BULAI (Romania, ALDE)

Vice-Chairperson: Ms Maria SYRENGELA (Greece, EPP/CD)

Socialists, Democrats and Greens Group (SOC)

– Mr Jone BLIKRA, Norway
– Ms Bisera KOSTADINOVSKA-STOJCHEVSKA, North Macedonia
– Mr António MENDONÇA MENDES, Portugal

Group of the European People's Party (EPP/CD)

– Ms Maria SYRENGELA, Greece
– ZZ
– ZZ

European Conservatives, Patriots & Affiliates (ECPA)

– ZZ
– ZZ

Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE)

– Mr Iulian BULAI, Romania
– Mr Arminas LYDEKA, Lithuania
– Mr Erich HESS, Switzerland

Group of the Unified European Left (UEL)

– ZZ

Secretariat

– Ms Sylvie AFFHOLDER, Head of the Elections Division, Secretary of the ad hoc committee
– Ms Roberta DAMORE, Project Manager, Committee on Rules, Ethics and Immunities
– Ms Amila BERKOVIC, Assistant, Elections Division

Appendix 2 – Programme of the meetings of the PACE delegation

Friday, 5 June 2026

9:00-9:45 PACE delegation meeting:
- Welcome by Iulian Bulai, Chairperson of the delegation
- Presentation by Mary-Ann Hennessey, Head of the Council of Europe Office in Pristina
- Presentation of the programme by the Secretariat

10:00-10:45 Meeting with the international community:
- European Union Office in Kosovo/European Union Special Representative (EUSR): Cyprien François, Chief Political Advisor EUSR currently acting as Deputy Ambassador, and Blerta Bejtullahu, Senior Political Analys EUSR
- EULEX: Dania Cossa, Head of Operations
- UNMIK: Georges Fahkri, Chief of the Political Affairs Office
- OSCE Mission in Kosovo: Pascale Roussy, Director of the Democratisation Department, and Ilir Haziri, Elections Adviser
- KFOR: Alexander Avløs Aalmo, Deputy Chief Political Advisor

11:00-12:00 Meeting with civil society representatives:
- Youth Initiative for Human Rights: Ilir Vitija
- Center for Affirmative Social Actions-CASA: Boban Simic
- Democracy for Development: Ferid Murseli
- NGO Aktiv: Miodrag Milicevic
- Kosovo Law Institute: Qemajl Marmullakaj
- Lëvizja FOL: Burbuqe Kastrati

14:30-15:15 Meeting with Ambassadors and Chargé d'affaires of countries represented in the delegation (Romania, North Macedonia, Greece, Switzerland) and from the Quint countries (France, Germany, Italy, United Kingdom):
- Rainer Rudolph, Ambassador of Germany
- Jürg Sprecher, Ambassador of Switzerland
- Olivier Guérot, Ambassador of France
- Heleni Vakali, Head of the Liaison Office of Greece
- Alin Ciocănea, Head of Mission, Romania
- Chiara Castaldo, Deputy Head of Mission, Italy
- Annie Skeat, Head of Internal Politics, Embassy of the United Kingdom

15:30-16:15 Meeting with Besnik Berisha, Chairperson of the Independent Media Commission (IMC)

16:30-17:30 Meeting with Kreshnik Radoniqi, Chairperson of the Central Election Commission (CEC)

17:30-18:15 Meeting with Zenel Leku, Chairperson of the Electoral Complaints and Appeals Panel (ECAP)

19:00-19:45 Meeting with Kreshnik Ahmeti, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Diaspora

Saturday, 6 June 2026

9:30-12:30 Meeting with leaders and representatives of main political parties:
- Democratic Party of Kosovo (Partia Demokratike e Kosovë-PDK): Ardian Arifaj, Chief of Staff
- Lëvizja Vetëvendosje (Self-Determination Movement-LVV):Alim Rama, General Secretary of LVV

12:30-13:30 Meeting with civil society representatives (cont'd):
- Democracy in Action: Eugen Cakolli

– Flutura Kusari, Council of Europe media expert
– Hibrid (media fact-checking organisation): Hyrije Mehmeti

Sunday, 7 June 2026

Election Day	Observation in polling stations
(Polling stations open at 7:00 and close at 19:00)	
17:30-18:00	First feedback session

Monday, 8 June 2026

8:00-9:00	Meeting of the delegation (debriefing and preparation of the delegation's statement)
10:00-10:30	Press conference

Appendix 3 – Statement of the Delegation

08/06/2026 – PACE observers hail smooth early elections in Kosovo*, urge political compromise and swift election of the President

A delegation from the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) has welcomed the orderly and smooth conduct of Kosovo's early elections on 7 June 2026, which took place without major incidents. The delegation urged all elected representatives to engage now in genuinely constructive dialogue to reach the necessary compromises to promptly elect the president and advance the country's democratic processes.

For the third time in 16 months, voters in Kosovo were called to the polls, following the inability of political parties to reach an agreement and elect a president, which resulted in the dissolution of the Assembly.

These elections took place against a backdrop of voter frustration and fatigue. The traditional campaign was subdued, characterised by a lack of substantial debate. A shift towards digital campaigning was observed. In this context, the delegation commends all the people of Kosovo for their commitment to democracy and their involvement in these elections. In a country with a history of high voter turnout, the significant drop in voter participation should however be a wake-up call.

The PACE delegation, led by Iulian Bulai (Romania, ALDE), included ten members: seven parliamentarians from three political groups and seven Council of Europe member states, along with staff. On election day, PACE teams were deployed in Pristina and its surroundings, as well as in Gjakova/Đakovica, Gjilan/Gnjilane, Gračanica/Graçanicë, Kamenicë/Kamenica, Klinë/Klina, Leposavić/Leposaviq, Lipjan/Lipljan, Mamushë/Mamuša, Theranda/Suva Reka, Mitrovica, Severna Mitrovica/Mitrovicë e Veriut, Mitrovicë e Jugut/Južna Mitrovica, Parteš/Partesh, Pejë/Peć, Podujevë/Podujevo, Prizren and Ranilug/Ranillug.

In the limited number of polling stations observed, the delegation found the elections to be conducted smoothly and professionally. Electoral officers demonstrated competence, and the atmosphere was calm and orderly, with polling stations effectively managed by both majority and non-majority community representatives. However, language difficulties caused by inadequate representation of the community which makes up the majority in certain municipalities have created some friction in few cases. Equitable ethnic representation in local election commissions should be improved. Likewise, the inclusiveness of multilingualism could be enhanced.

The delegation also noted improvements in regulating assistance for voters with specific needs, while the accessibility of polling stations remained an issue.

Despite tight deadlines, the elections were technically well-organised and broadly inclusive. The Central Election Commission (CEC) deserves credit for the inclusive certification of party and candidate lists, including those submitted by the main Kosovo Serb party, Srpska Lista. The reduction in the number of complaints registered by the CEC and the Electoral Complaints and Appeals Panel (ECAP) signals progress. However, last-minute changes to the CEC's rules complicated the registration of civil society observers.

The delegation took note of some measures seeking to prevent attempted manipulation in the counting of preferential votes – a significant issue in the previous election. The presence of domestic election observers at the Municipal Counting Centers will be key, and their role is essential in safeguarding electoral transparency and integrity.

A record number of diaspora voters registered for these elections. However, the late CEC decision allowing voting with expired IDs, and its subsequent reversal by the ECAP just days before the election, caused confusion, with the CEC resorting to additional verification of postal ballots upon their reception in Pristina.

The delegation heard from several interlocutors that the brief 10-day campaign was marred by allegations of misuse of administrative resources by the caretaker government, including the targeted distribution of social allowances and an announcement of subsidies to airlines for the diaspora – the timing of these measures was widely perceived as intended to benefit the ruling party.

The media landscape in Kosovo is diverse; however, the delegation received reports of AI-generated videos, misinformation and the appearance of fake accounts that could influence voters' informed decision-making. There are serious concerns about the country's limited capacity to address these threats and the lack of adequate institutional responses to remove harmful content. Furthermore, interference from Serbia was noted to influence the vote of Kosovo Serbs for one specific party. Particularly worrying was that such disinformation and online abuse often targeted women politicians, undermining their ability to campaign and their participation in public life.

“The voters of Kosovo have spoken clearly. They now expect their elected representatives to deliver decisive leadership, seek constructive compromise, and move the country forward on its Euro-Atlantic path – ending all cynical political games,” the head of delegation stated. “Democracy requires compromise and coalition-building, not zero-sum victories.”

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe stands ready to assist Kosovo in further improving its electoral framework and strengthening the capacity of election stakeholders.