

INFORMATION BULLETIN

A Political Update: The Formation of the New Government of Kosovo, Minority Community Representation and Challenges Ahead

I. The New Government

Following almost 6 months of political wrangling, the Assembly of Kosovo elected Isa Mustafa, chairman of LDK and former mayor of Pristina, Prime Minister on 9 December 2014. Mustafa was elected with 73 votes for, 38 against, and 2 abstentions. His election is part of the PDK-LDK coalition agreement agreed in late November and signed on 8 December. The agreement stipulates that the government will be led by Isa Mustafa, chairman of LDK, with Hashim Thaçi, chairman of PDK and outgoing Prime Minister, serving as deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs. Earlier yesterday, deputy chairman of PDK, Kadri Veseli, was elected as Assembly Speaker. Srpska lista—a coalition of several parties representing the Serbian community in Kosovo—is also part of the coalition government led by Mustafa and several of its representatives have been appointed in the new government.

Branimir Stojanović, current mayor of Gračanica/Graçanicë was appointed Deputy Prime Minister, while Aleksandar Jablanović and Ljubomir Marić were appointed as Minister of Communities and Return, and Minister of Local Self-Government Administration, respectively. Jablanović is the President of Srpska lista, while Marić is a member of the Serbian Management Team for the Association/Community of Serb-majority municipalities. Rasim Demiri of the Bosniak coalition VAKAT was appointed Minister without Portfolio, while Mahir Jağcılar of the Kosovo Turkish Democratic Party was re-appointed to his position as Minister of Public Administration. Overall, minority communities have been appointed to 4 ministerial positions and one deputy prime ministerial position, a clear sign of their influence in the formation of the government.

II. Negotiations & Constitutional Requirements

Kosovo held early elections on June 8 after the Government of Kosovo, led by Hashim Thaçi, lost its majority in the Assembly. PDK came out on top after early elections, but was unable to find a coalition partner due to the refusal of LDK, VV, and AAK to enter into negotiations for a coalition agreement. The latter struck an agreement to exclude PDK and Hashim Thaçi from any future coalition governments by way of creating the short-lived LDK-AAK-Nisma-Vetëvendosje (dubbed “VLAN” by the media) political bloc, but failed to do so due to not meeting procedural requirements outlined by several Constitutional Court rulings. After the failure of VLAN and increasing international pressure on key political actors, PDK and LDK came to an agreement to share power and form the next coalition government. According to the agreement, outgoing Prime Minister Thaçi would become deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs in a government led by LDK chairman Isa Mustafa. Thaçi would also be supported by LDK in any future attempt to become President after the mandate of the current President, Atifete Jahjaga, expires. According to the agreement, Deputy Chairman of PDK, Kadri Veseli, was slated to become Assembly Speaker and was duly elected on 8 December 2014 with 71 votes for, 42 against, and 2 abstentions. Jasmina Živković of Srpska lista was elected as one of the five deputy chairmen of the Assembly.



Political cartoon by Jeton Mikullovcı (KOHA Ditore, 9 December 2014).

Copyright: KOHA Ditore and Jeton Mikullovcı

Following the election of Veseli, President Jahjaga—in agreement with Thaçi and Mustafa—mandated the latter with the formation of the next government. The Assembly reconvened in order to elect the new government, but was unable to do so due to the refusal of Srpska lista to vote for the government. Srpska lista had previously voiced its support to the PDK-LDK coalition government and made clear its willingness to be part of it if its demands were met. On 8 December, Srpska lista made its demands known to PDK-LDK and to the wider audience by offering a list of demands it deems non-negotiable. According to media reports^[1], the demands are as follows:

1. Deputy Commander of the Kosovo Security Force
2. Deputy Head of the Kosovo Intelligence Agency
3. Immediate establishment of the Association/Community of Serb-majority Municipalities
4. Ending privatization in all Serb-majority areas in Kosovo
5. Return of Kosovo Serbs to Kosovo from Serbia and other places
6. Protection for the property of the Serb Orthodox Church
7. Return of property illegally taken from Serbs



A photograph of the purported agreement between PDK, LDK and Srpska lista published in Kosovo media on 9 December, 2014.

It is not entirely clear whether the demands of Srpska lista have been met—and if yes, to what extent—by coalition partners PDK-LDK, but their prominent presence in the new government indicates that Srpska lista will have some political weight in the upcoming legislature.

Article 96.3, 96.4, and 96.5 of the Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo state that the Government of Kosovo must have at least one Minister from the Kosovo Serb community and one Minister from another non-majority community. It further states that, should there be more than 10 Ministers, as is the case in the newly formed government, at least 2 of them shall be from the Kosovo Serb community. And finally, it says that those Ministers from the Serb community must come after “consultation with consultations with parties, coalitions or groups representing Communities that are not in the majority in Kosovo.” If coming from outside the Assembly of Kosovo, “these Ministers and Deputy Ministers shall require the formal endorsement of the majority of Assembly deputies belonging to parties, coalitions, citizens' initiatives and independent candidates having declared themselves to represent the Community concerned.”^[2] The appointment of four ministers and one deputy prime minister representing minority communities is clearly in line with constitutional requirements. Additionally, ministers representing minority communities enjoy the support of all minority community representatives in the Assembly as required by the Constitution. Srpska lista’s clear electoral victory, having won nine (9) out of ten (10) seats guaranteed to the Serb community, implies that it represents the democratic will of the Serb community in Kosovo. Rasim Demiri and Mahir Jaĝcılar were the Turkish and Bosniak candidates, respectively, with the most votes during the June 2014 parliamentary elections. ECMI Kosovo has previously written extensively on the issue of the election of the government and the role of community parties in its formation in its report *Minority Communities’ Political Parties in Kosovo’s Changing Political Landscape*.^[3]

III. The Challenges for the Next Government

Kosovo has been largely stagnating for the past six months in terms of political developments and in its domestic and also in its European integration agenda. Set against the backdrop of a fledgling economy and an increase in the number of economic migrants is reminiscent of the mass migrations of the 1990s, the new government has a long list of priority items awaiting it. Some of the immediate priorities related to community issues would be the adoption of the 2015 Budget, the establishment of the Special Court on investigating potential war crimes, the full establishment of the municipalities in the North of Kosovo (which up to now have only elected Mayors and assembly Members), the establishment of the Association/Community of

Serb-majority municipalities, kick-starting the dialogue with Serbia through the Brussels process, reinvigorating efforts for the implementation of the Strategy for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, settling the issue of higher education in Serbian language and the recognition of diplomas issued by the University of Mitrovica North, as well as a host of others pressing issues that need its immediate attention.

Much of the work will require intensive negotiation by partners within the coalition government. It still remains to be seen how the two biggest coalition partners will work together. The election of the coalition government appears to be a largely unpopular event, stemming largely from an unsuccessful governing attempt between the two biggest parties, which resulted in the coalition falling apart after two years (2008-2010). Moreover, the two parties have built their political platforms in opposition to each other. It also remains to be seen whether the collaboration between Albanian parties and Srpska lista is to be fruitful. In our previous reports we have drawn attention to the fact that Srpska is seen as directed by the Serbian Government and to the problems that might cause in the Kosovo government.

However, there is one positive change in relation to this government, as it has legitimate support from all Kosovo communities. The fact that the government is led by the two biggest Albanian parties, and that it includes Srpska lista who won 90 percent of the Serbian votes, as well as all minority representatives, provides a strong foundation for decisive decisions that are very much needed in Kosovo right now. The appointment of minority communities to 4 ministerial positions (2 representing the Serbian community and 2 representing other minority communities) and one deputy prime ministerial position indicates the importance of issues related to minority communities for the new government. The new ministers representing minority communities also enjoy the support of minority parties who won the June elections, signifying that this government has the support of all community representatives in the Assembly and the communities they represent. The new government enjoys the political support from all Kosovo communities that will be required to tackle the urgent issues the new government faces.

ECMI Kosovo would like to wish the new government led by Mr. Isa Mustafa and its coalition partners many successes in its work in tackling the many issues faced by the Kosovo society.

For further reading on political developments please see our latest political updates and analysis:

- *Challenges to Kosovo's Integration Efforts: Rising Emigration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians* - <http://www.ecmikosovo.org/?p=5847>
- *Bridging the Divide: Establishing a Joint Board for the city of Mitrovica* <http://www.ecmikosovo.org/?p=4953>
- *ECMI Kosovo Short Update on Political Developments: Minority Communities Want the Stalemate Over* - <http://www.ecmikosovo.org/?p=5779>
- *ECMI Kosovo Information Bulletin - An Overview of the Recent Security Situation in Kosovo* - <http://www.ecmikosovo.org/?p=5803>
- *General Elections in Kosovo: A View of Issues, Challenges and the Political Scene ahead*

of Voting on June 8th -<http://www.ecmikosovo.org/?p=4878>

- An Overview of some of the Changes in the Draft Law on General Elections in the Republic of Kosovo <http://www.ecmikosovo.org/?p=4735>

Please find here the [Albanian](#) and [Serbian](#) version.

[1] For more information, please see here (Albanian) <http://www.telegrafi.com/lajme/serbet-kushtezojne-pjesemarrjen-ne-qeveri-ja-kerkesat-e-tyre-2-54887.html> and here (Serbian)http://www.b92.net/info/vesti/index.php?yyyy=2014&mm=12&dd=08&nav_category=640&nav_id=933907

[2] Article 96.3, 96.4, 96.5 of the *Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo*.

[3] For more information, please see here: <http://www.ecmikosovo.org/?p=5624>

[like on Facebook](#) | [watch on YouTube](#) | share:   

About ECMI Kosovo

ECMI Kosovo is the principal non-governmental organisation engaged with minority issues in Kosovo, with the overarching aim to develop inclusive, representative, community-sensitive institutions that support a stable multi-ethnic Kosovo. ECMI Kosovo contributes to the developing, strengthening and implementation of relevant legislation, supports the institutionalisation of communities-related governmental bodies, and enhances the capacity of civil society actors and the government to engage with one another in a constructive and sustainable way.

Our mailing addresses:

Str. Nëna Terezë
Nr. 41, Apt. 29
10000 Prishtinë/Priština, Kosovo
Tel: +381 (0)38 224473
Email: info@ecmikosovo.org
Str. Cika Jovina Nr. 3, I floor
38220 Mitrovica/Mitrovicë North,
Kosovo
Tel: +381 (0)64 0055488

[unsubscribe from this list](#) | [update subscription preferences](#)