

KOSOVO 2020 HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Kosovo is a parliamentary democracy. The constitution and laws provide for an elected unicameral parliament (the Assembly), which in turn elects a president, whose choice of prime minister must be approved by the Assembly. Parliamentary elections were last held in October 2019 in a process generally considered free and fair, although European Union election observers noted that misuse of public resources and a lack of transparency of campaign finances resulted in an uneven playing field throughout the country. The Assembly was constituted in December 2019 with Albin Kurti confirmed as prime minister in February. After a no-confidence vote unseated Kurti's government in March, Avdullah Hoti became prime minister on June 3 in a reconstituted government.

Security forces include the Kosovo Police and the Kosovo Security Force, which respectively report to the Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Defense. The government continued the process of gradually transitioning the Kosovo Security Force into a territorial defense force in accordance with a 10-year plan which began in 2019. The Border Police, a subgroup of the Kosovo Police, are responsible for security at the border. Police maintain internal security, with the European Union rule-of-law mission in the country as a second responder for incidents of unrest. The NATO-led Kosovo Force, an international peacekeeping force, is a third responder. NATO's Kosovo Force is responsible for providing a safe and secure environment and ensuring freedom of movement for all citizens. As of August, NATO's Kosovo Force mission had approximately 3,400 troops from 27 countries. Civilian authorities maintained effective control of security forces. Members of the security forces committed some abuses, including alleged use of excessive force and mistreatment of prisoners by police.

Significant human rights issues included: undue restrictions on the press, including violence or threats of violence against journalists; government corruption and impunity; and attacks against members of ethnic minorities or other marginalized communities.

KOSOVO

and harassment occurred on the job but went unreported due to fear of dismissal or retaliation.

The law does not provide workers the right to remove themselves from a dangerous work situation without jeopardy to their employment. According to the Labor Ministry, informal employer-employee arrangements may address when and whether employees may remove themselves from work due to dangerous work situations but the government did not track these arrangements. There were eight worker fatalities as a result of inadequate or unsafe work conditions during the year. According to experts, violations of wage, overtime, and occupational health and safety standards were common for both men and women, as well as foreign migrant workers, particularly those who faced hazardous or exploitative working conditions, such as in construction and agriculture.