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**SWISS  
COOPERATION  
PROGRAMME  
IN KOSOVO  
2026-2029**

**FOREIGN POLICY  
STRATEGY  
2024-2027**



**INTERNATIONAL  
COOPERATION  
STRATEGY  
2025-2028**



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COOPERATION  
PROGRAMME  
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# Background

Switzerland was among the first countries to recognise Kosovo, Europe's youngest state, having declared independence in 2008. Since then, the two countries have developed strong ties, built on an active Kosovar diaspora, sustained Swiss humanitarian assistance and development cooperation, close diplomatic relations and Switzerland's contribution of personnel to the NATO-led international peacekeeping force, KFOR.

Switzerland's engagement reflects its broader foreign policy commitment to the Western Balkans, aimed at promoting stability, prosperity and the region's path toward European integration. Kosovo is in the process of becoming a fully established democracy with an active civil society, a diverse media landscape and a growing economy. The country aspires to EU accession and integration in the transatlantic community. With a young and entrepreneurial population and thanks to diaspora

remittances and knowledge transfer, Kosovo holds significant potential for the future.

Despite Kosovo's promising trajectory in nation-building, several challenges persist. Kosovo's statehood is not yet universally recognised; EU integration and participation in various multilateral forums remain politically complex. Advancement in the normalization process between Kosovo and Serbia has continued at a slow pace. In addition, the integration of the Kosovo-Serb community remains incomplete, reflected, for instance, in separate media environments, only partial economic participation and limited linguistic equality.

Moreover, the country faces significant environmental challenges, driven by climate change, weak institutions, outdated energy infrastructure and reliance on lignite-based power. Although the economy has grown steadily, it remains dependent on

consumption and remittances. Low productivity and limited competitiveness of enterprises, combined with a significant skills gap – particularly among women – continue to constrain progress. While quality of life is improving, Kosovo still records some of the weakest health outcomes in Southeast Europe. Such limited opportunities for human development have contributed to ongoing emigration.

The Government of Kosovo views the prospect of EU accession and its related pre-accession instruments as key drivers of the country's sustainable development pathway, as outlined in its National Development Strategy 2030. For the period 2026–2029, Switzerland will continue its trusted engagement in Kosovo, supporting the country in seizing opportunities and addressing challenges on its path forward.



# Results 2022–2025

Swiss-Kosovar cooperation, closely aligned with Kosovo's National Development Strategy, delivered strong and encouraging results during 2022–2025.

## **Democratic Governance and Peace**

Switzerland has continued to facilitate direct exchanges towards the normalisation of relations between Kosovo and Serbia, thereby complementing the official peace process led by the EU. Swiss support also significantly strengthened Kosovo's young democracy by improving municipal services. This included anchoring the Municipal Performance Grant in law, contributing to increased citizen satisfaction. Furthermore, Switzerland promoted stronger citizen participation and increased public trust in civil society organisations (CSOs). It contributed to strengthening anti-corruption mechanisms. Kosovo's Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index improved from 36 to 44 between 2020 and 2024.

## **Sustainable Economic Development**

Switzerland contributed to economic growth through employment creation, income generation and systemic reforms. More than 10,000 people improved their employment situation, and 14,000 enrolled in vocational schools, generating over CHF 4 million in additional net income. Particular attention was given to women, supporting their entry into traditionally male-dominated professions and increasing their participation in the labour market. Swiss-supported initiatives also strengthened Kosovo's business environment and fostered lasting change by institutionalising career guidance services, aligning safety standards with EU requirements and boosting local food production systems.

## **Climate Change, Water and Health**

To address climate vulnerability and water stress, Switzerland supported authorities in aligning policies with EU standards and strengthening institutional performance. These efforts contributed to reducing water

losses, improving energy efficiency and promoting renewable energy solutions. In the health sector, Swiss support fostered a shift toward a people-centred, prevention-oriented primary healthcare system. This enabled more individuals to better manage chronic conditions and supported ongoing improvements in the quality of care based on patient needs. Finally, through Switzerland's Small Grants Programme, partnerships with Kosovar civil society were further deepened, and cultural initiatives were promoted, contributing to stronger social cohesion and greater community resilience.

## **Migration**

The Migration Partnership between Kosovo and Switzerland was facilitated by exchanges in the form of a migration dialogue. Swiss support has contributed significantly to strengthening Kosovo's migration management capacities. Kosovo's migrant reception system was improved, in line with the country's Migration Strategy.

# Switzerland's commitment 2026–2029

In light of Kosovo's continued progress as an upper-middle-income country and ongoing changes in the country's context, the Swiss-Kosovar partnership will further mature into a strategic, mutually reinforcing cooperation model. Switzerland's Cooperation Programme 2026–2029 supports Kosovo in building a peaceful and inclusive society by strengthening public institutions and advancing sustainable development and the green transition. Aligned with Kosovo's National Development Strategy 2030, the programme is structured around three priority areas.

## **Democratic Governance and Peace**

Firmly aligned with EU reform priorities and emphasising the use of government systems, the Swiss Cooperation Programme supports governance reforms at both central and local levels. Focusing on local governance, municipal financing and performance, it aims to improve accountability and further increase citizen satisfaction. Swiss interventions also support the fight against corruption by fostering institutional cooperation and strengthening capacities to detect and address corruption and financial crime. Furthermore, continued engagement with civil society enables citizens and civic groups to play an active role in public affairs and democratic processes, and fosters women's political participation and gender-responsive governance. Switzerland further promotes a peaceful and inclusive society by strengthening intercommunity relations, supporting inclusive processes for dealing with the past, fostering dialogue

and trust between communities, institutions and political representatives – thereby contributing to the normalisation of relations between Kosovo and Serbia.

## **Sustainable Economic Development and Green Transition**

Switzerland supports Kosovo in building a competitive, inclusive and sustainable economy, in line with regional frameworks such as the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans. To this end, the programme focuses on private-sector development, sustainable management of natural resources and climate-resilient urban development. Swiss interventions contribute to a more dynamic business environment that fosters decent and inclusive jobs. In particular, Switzerland strengthens environmentally responsible business practices, economic governance and framework conditions and innovation through digital finance, intellectual property protection and structured

public-private dialogue. In parallel, Switzerland facilitates integrated water resources management and climate-resilient urban development. This programme component aims to improve governance, advance legal reforms and strengthen institutional capacities to deliver more effective and reliable water services. Integrated urban development and mobility solutions further enhance climate-resilient infrastructure, urban liveability and environmental performance, contributing to a more efficient and better-connected urban transportation system.

### **Equitable Human Development**

Switzerland supports Kosovo in strengthening its human capital by promoting equitable access to public services. A key priority is improving health outcomes through a stronger and more sustainable healthcare system. This includes strengthening governance, building institutional capacity

and ensuring equitable access to services, with a focus on patient-centred care and non-communicable diseases. Through targeted support to the labour market, Switzerland helps improve employment prospects and better align workforce skills with private-sector needs. Interventions focus on increasing participation, enhancing employability and creating a more enabling environment for job creation. Special attention is given to promoting women's inclusion, addressing structural barriers and ensuring equal opportunities for all. In addition, Switzerland promotes social cohesion by supporting disadvantaged communities and reducing inequalities, with a particular focus on the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. These efforts are complemented by support for cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue, thus strengthening the cultural sector and contributing to a more inclusive, cohesive and vibrant society.

### **Migration Partnership**

Switzerland and Kosovo will continue their migration partnership since 2010, built on a structured migration dialogue and jointly developed cooperation measures with the State Secretariat for Migration (SEM) to strengthen migration management.

### **Cross-Cutting Themes**

Governance, gender equality and social inclusion are integrated across all areas of Swiss cooperation, contributing to more inclusive policies, stronger public institutions and more equitable access to services and economic opportunities.

## Democratic Governance and Peace



## Equitable Human Development



## Sustainable Economic Development and Green Transition





# Approach and Partners

As a bilateral partner, Switzerland seeks to reinforce its role in policy dialogue with the Government of Kosovo, fostering a strong, mutually beneficial partnership. Moreover, to implement the Cooperation Programme, Switzerland partners with a range of actors, including national and local authorities, civil society and the private sector.

To enhance the sustainability of results over the four-year period, Switzerland focuses on transformative processes that drive reforms and systemic change. It builds on Swiss and Kosovar expertise, long-term engagement

and a whole-of-government approach. By mobilising complementary strengths, it delivers coherent, context-sensitive support grounded in citizen-centred perspectives. Drawing on well-established Swiss presence and regional networks in the Western Balkans, the programme also promotes cross-border exchange, mutual learning and constructive engagement in regional policy processes.

The Swiss Cooperation Programme 2026–2029 is funded and implemented by four Swiss government agencies: the Swiss

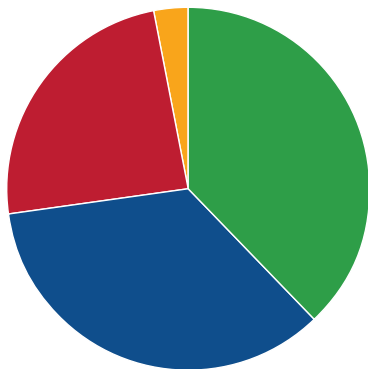
Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), the Peace and Human Rights Division (PHRD), the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) and the State Secretariat for Migration (SEM). These entities work closely to maximise the programme’s impact.





The total budget amounts to CHF 64.5 million. This figure may vary depending on evolving circumstances.

## Cooperation Programme 2026–2029

### Indicative total budget

CHF 64'500'000 \*



-  Sustainable Economic Development and Green Transition
-  Equitable Human Development
-  Democratic Governance and Peace
-  Migration

\* The information on the financial envelope is indicative. This information serves merely as a basis for the forward spending plans that are reviewed each year by the Federal Council and the Swiss Parliament.





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Layout:  
Mark Manion, Communication Arts

Photos:  
FDFA

Contact:  
Section Eastern Europe  
+41 58 467 87 78  
[deza.osteuropa@eda.admin.ch](mailto:deza.osteuropa@eda.admin.ch)

Embassy of Switzerland  
Besa Imami Street 6  
10000 Pristina  
Kosovo  
[pristina@eda.admin.ch](mailto:pristina@eda.admin.ch)

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