

## **Mutual Legal Assistance**

The EUSR Rule of Law and Legal Section facilitates mutual legal assistance and supports judicial cooperation between Kosovo<sup>1</sup> and external counterparts.

Political status of Kosovo poses significant obstacles to effective judicial cooperation in criminal and civil matters between Kosovo and other countries. Lack of communication channels between Kosovo judicial authorities and those of the countries that have not recognized Kosovo, including five European Union member states (non-recognizers), has had an adverse impact on number of judicial procedures and realization of fair trial guarantees. In order to address those challenges, the European Union in Kosovo has offered an interface for cooperation by acting as an intermediary in the process.

These functions are carried out by the EUSR Rule of Law and Legal Section, which supports communication between the respective authorities and ensures efficient processing of the mutual legal assistance requests. Pursuant to the EUSR's mandate, the team working on mutual legal assistance issues also works toward strengthening capacities of domestic stakeholders and provides legal advice on legal cooperation issues to the Kosovo Ministry of Justice by reviewing and advising on legislation, international agreements and strategic documents related to legal cooperation in civil and criminal matters.

---

<sup>1</sup> This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 (1999) and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.