



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No. 1351 Vienna, 20 January 2022

EU Statement on the Serbian referendum about constitutional amendments

1. The European Union welcomes the referendum about constitutional amendments held by Serbia on 16 January 2022. This marks the completion of an important step in the Constitutional reform with a view to strengthening the independence of the judiciary, in line with Serbia's strategic choice to accede to the European Union.
2. The reform process to strengthen the independence of the judiciary does not end here and needs to continue. A number of laws need to be amended for the effective implementation of the constitutional amendments. These should be prepared as a matter of priority through a holistic reform of the relevant laws, in line with European standards.
3. We welcome the Serbian Government's intention to continue involving the Venice Commission in the next steps. The EU will continue to closely follow this process and provide financial and technical support for the implementation of justice reforms.
4. At the same time, the EU regrets that it was not possible to find an agreement with the Kosovo*¹ institutions allowing the OSCE Mission in Kosovo to collect the ballots, in accordance with past practice.

The Candidate Countries REPUBLIC of NORTH MACEDONIA* and MONTENEGRO*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA countries LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE and GEORGIA align themselves with this statement.

* 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.

* Republic of North Macedonia and Montenegro continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.