

# The scandal of the EU's Kosovo mission

According to the EU Observer, there have been some distinctly dodgy goings on at Eulex, the EU's "rule of law" mission in Kosovo. And senior figures from the EU foreign service have refused to answer questions from MEPs about what is going on.

Kosovo has not featured much in the news in recent years. Following the war of 1999, it declared independence from Serbia in 2008 and has been recognised as an independent country by a number of countries, including the UK. However, Russia, China and Serbia have refused to do so.

However, due to the fragile situation in the country, it still requires a helping hand. The EU, always keen to interfere where it can, created Eulex in December 2008, to assume responsibilities in the areas of police, customs and the judiciary. It employs 1,600 policemen, judges, and prosecutors seconded from around Europe and is by far the EU's biggest foreign crisis mission

According to the Kosovo daily Koha Ditore, top Eulex officials took bribes from Kosovo gangsters to block prosecutions, colluded with criminal suspects and quashed internal Eulex probes. It also reported that Eulex gave classified information to Serbian intelligence services.

Some members of the EU's foreign affairs committee have proposed that Olaf, the EU's anti-fraud office, should look into these allegations.

Allegations of corruption within Eulex go back to 2012, when a British prosecutor called Maria Bamieh was suspended on the grounds that she leaked information to the press. Responding to questions about the recent allegations, she said that Eulex' internal investigation is a "lie ... a complete joke"

because key suspects are not being questioned and are still being allowed to work on sensitive cases.

Perhaps the most interesting comment on the whole affair came from Tonino Picula, a centre-left Croatian MEP who said, "The reputation of the European Union on Kosovo is at stake".

What reputation? Given its dodgy dealings in Ukraine, the EU's reputation when it comes to foreign affairs can't fall much lower. Its dealings in Kosovo are simply par for the course.