

Abstract

This research investigates the targeting of EU state building policies in Kosovo. By employing the conceptual framework of the ‘minimalist state’ and applying this to the case, it studies to what extent the EU policies are suitable to improve Kosovo’s status and performance as a state. Minimalist states are countries that have been established as a result of intervention and state building by international actors and were developed to accommodate competing claims, but in doing so, fall short of sets of functions states are widely expected to carry out. By applying this concept to Kosovo, this study analyses to what extent the EU’s policies are targeted correctly to improve the features of Kosovo’s minimalist state. The study was conducted by analysing the three main policy frameworks through which it engages with Kosovo: the Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP), EULEX, and the Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue. Document analysis was conducted with Kosovo as a single case study to answer the research question. The research has shown that the EU addresses only a limited number of features of Kosovo’s minimalist state. Whereas the policies focus on increasing the strength of Kosovo’s state, the EU’s state building policies do not directly target the scope and legitimacy of Kosovo.

Keywords: European Union, EU foreign policy, Kosovo, minimalist state.