

WRITTEN QUESTION E-5712/08
by Paulo Casaca (PSE)
to the Commission

Subject: Electoral reform in Albania

I wish to draw the Commission's attention to the upcoming electoral reform in Albania.

The new electoral code might lead to the disappearance of several parliamentary parties which might considerably weaken the political debate and therefore might undermine democracy in Albania.

Albania is an aspiring EU country which has had a notorious record in organising free and fair elections.

The elections of 2009 are crucial for Albania and its new standards of elections, as it is approaching EU membership.

In view of the above, is the Commission considering paying close attention to the preparation of this new electoral code in Albania, which might reduce the democratic space of some parties with considerable weight in the Albanian electorate?

Does the Commission plan to get some guarantees that Albania will have free and fair elections, which will be based on:

- a transparent, all-inclusive electoral reform and a democratic electoral code, respecting and involving all the parties;
- a comprehensive, all-inclusive process of counting and administration of votes;
- fair rules that favour pluralism;
- voting by citizens with new identification documents?